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of Debates
(Hansard)**

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(Hansard)**

Thursday 29 November 2001

Jeudi 29 novembre 2001

Speaker
Honourable Gary Carr

Président
L'honorable Gary Carr

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 29 November 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 29 novembre 2001

*The House met at 1000.
Prayers.*

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

CHARITY FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LES ACTIVITÉS DE FINANCEMENT DES ORGANISMES DE BIENFAISANCE

Mr Crozier moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 26, An Act to amend the Safe Streets Act, 1999 and the Highway Traffic Act to recognize the fundraising activities of legitimate charities / Projet de loi 26, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1999 sur la sécurité dans les rues et le Code de la route pour reconnaître les activités de financement des organismes de bienfaisance légitimes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): The member for Essex has up to 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): I'm pleased to have with me some moral support this morning. I would like to introduce to you Richard Metzloff, who is client of the year in Ontario for muscular dystrophy. He's in the Speaker's gallery and I'm pleased to have Richard with me.

As well, I have George Henderson, the national manager of firefighter relations and communication for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada, and Yves Savoie, the national executive director for muscular dystrophy. They are in the members' gallery.

As well as their support, I would appreciate the support of my colleagues, the members of the third party and, most importantly of course, the members of the government caucus.

This bill is short and sweet and is needed. Just a very brief explanation of what this bill does: it is to amend the Safe Streets Act so that charities that are registered under the Income Tax Act and have been permitted by bylaw of the municipality or a resolution of the council of the municipality may conduct their fundraising activities on or beside roadsides, in parking lots and the like.

To give you just a brief history, what happened of course was that when the Safe Streets Act was passed in

1999, it was intended for, I believe, and has been effective when it comes to, squeegee kids, as they're referred to, mainly on the streets of Toronto, and I have no argument with that. The bill, as I said, has been effective. But what happened was—and I don't think this was expected when the bill was drafted—that it had a much broader effect. What it did and what it has done and who it has hurt are those charities that, historically, have entered upon our streets to raise money. Most notably, ones that we would recognize right away would be the firefighters of Ontario and their support of muscular dystrophy and perhaps Goodfellows in your cities where they sell their Christmas papers.

What has happened is this: when it was first pointed out how broad the Safe Streets Act was and how it was going to affect these charities, the reaction of the minister of the day was, "Charities won't be bothered. They'll still be able to carry on their activities." Then there was a later reaction from the Attorney General of the day that fundraising events in any of these venues are illegal and they would have to abide by the law.

I will admit that in some areas these activities have been able to be carried on because police services have simply looked the other way, but that hasn't been the case everywhere. There have been instances, and we have them documented, where either there has been a complaint by a citizen on which the police services then had to act, or there are municipalities where the police services quite rightly have said, "You just can't carry on this type of fundraising activity." It's put the police services in a bit of a spot. You might say this law has handcuffed them.

What we want to do is abide by the law. I think everybody wants to do that. We simply want to change the law so that registered charities will be able to conduct these activities if they go to their town councils and receive permission through a bylaw or through a resolution.

When I refer to the bind it puts our police services in, Staff Sergeant Dave Rossell, a spokesman for the Windsor Police Services, stated this in regard to the debate around the Safe Streets Act: "We can't pick and choose which laws we want to enforce and those we don't. We may be put in a position where we have to enforce." This small amendment to the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act will allow our police services to abide by the law and not have to pick and choose.

As an example, a firefighter fundraiser was shut down in Welland on August 25 of this year after a complaint was lodged under the Safe Streets Act. This has been

reported across the province and perhaps many of the members in the Legislature have read about it.

Firefighters have been doing roadside events for over 50 years, and not once in those 50 years has there ever been a report of an accident or an injury resulting from these activities. Firefighters are safety professionals and they really don't need, I suggest, legislation to tell them how to keep safe.

The intent of Bill 26, I emphasize, once is to allow registered charities to solicit where municipal bylaws allow, and that's all it is. It makes a slight amendment to the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act because, technically, many kinds of roadside solicitation could be interpreted as illegal under the Highway Traffic Act, but there was never any problem until the Safe Streets Act came along.

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I also point out that not only does the Safe Streets Act ban fundraising activities on the roadways, but it also bans them in parking lots, near banks, bus stops and pay phones. This has proved to be very problematic for the charities.

I want to give you some idea of what the effect has been from a monetary standpoint. The Muscular Dystrophy Association has predicted that this may cost them as much as \$700,000, because one of their main fundraising activities, if not the main one, has been through firemen's boot drives. This has had a very detrimental effect on that. We can also point out that there are other charities. I've already mentioned the Goodfellows; many of us in this Legislature have stood on street corners and in roadways at traffic signals selling Goodfellow newspapers at Christmastime. You and I don't want to do anything that's illegal, do we, Speaker? The Kinette clubs in Ontario, the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving, and even the Windsor Regional Hospital burn unit in my area have been affected by this Safe Streets Act and would be assisted immensely by the amendments to that act.

I'm asking today for the support of everybody in this Legislature, and beyond that, if we can have this pass second reading, as it did in the last session—Speaker, you will recall that it passed second reading and unfortunately died on the order paper. I won't give up, so I think what you could do best today is to support me, but, more important, support those on whose behalf I'm speaking: the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Goodfellows, the Kinettes, the students in universities. They all want your help by supporting this legislation, and I respectfully ask my colleagues in this Legislature to support this bill and pass its second reading today.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): New Democrats support the bill. We're going to vote for it. The fact is, the so-called squeegee bill, the Safe Streets Act—oh, give me a break. It's a stupid bill. It was a stupid bill to begin with. It never should have been passed. I understand the motive of the author of this bill in trying to narrow it down to the narrowest issue, to perhaps give it some more currency with the government members, but the squeegee bill was a stupid bill and still is.

When I go home from Toronto down University Avenue or down Spadina, there are still people at the end of University and Spadina, except, you see—and I'm good for a loonie or toonie, and it doesn't offend me at all. The fact is that the squeegee bill didn't eliminate homeless people in the city of Toronto, except now they're at the end of University and Spadina without a squeegee, because that's a dead giveaway. Do you know what I mean? So I don't get my windows cleaned. I'm being very candid that on a slushy winter day, like the days we're approaching, I welcomed the squeegee kid, person, at the end of University Avenue or Spadina so I could get at least a clean windshield before I hit the Gardiner. I wish there were a couple down at the area of the Burlington Skyway. I'm serious. They're still there—again, they're still being forced to panhandle—except they can't carry squeegees. They can't perform that service because, as I'm sure the parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General will explain to us, it would be evidence of the offence of squeegeeing.

Let's not forget the other parts of this silly bill. The parliamentary assistant may want to comment on the stats, because this Safe Streets Act was about squeegee kids; it was also about throwing away used condoms. It was designed to permit a charge to be laid if you threw away a used condom. At the time I reflected on the fact that I wouldn't want to have to be the police officer collecting the evidence. I'd like the parliamentary assistant to tell us exactly how many used condoms have been recovered and are in evidence lockers or storage at police stations either in Toronto or anywhere else in the province.

Please. The bill is about this government trying to—it wasn't just imagery; it wasn't just puffery. One of the things that this government has done—very American-style and very frightening—has been, rather than to specifically address issues like poverty and homelessness, they simply wanted to obliterate the evidence of it. They wanted to clean up the streets, which means sweeping the streets clean of poor people and of pan-handlers. You can bust as many panhandlers as you want; it doesn't change the fact that there are thousands of homeless people in this city who are forced to revert to begging for alms, quite frankly, a historical and honourable thing in and of itself.

Let me tell you what happened in Welland. We all remember the "Oh, don't worry" admonitions by the Attorney General who authored the squeegee bill. "Oh, don't worry. Oh, the bill's not designed to interrupt bona fide fundraising." I recall at the time—check the Hansard—saying that all you need is one wacko, one nutbar, to complain, and then the police have to go there even though the police were prepared to use their discretion. One wacko, one nutbar, will compel the police to intervene. Well, in 2000 I was out on the streets proudly breaking the law, because the bill was in effect. I was proudly breaking the squeegee law, along with volunteer firefighters. We were right outside the Welland Tribune on East Main Street.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey):
You were a squeegee kid.

Mr Kormos: You bet your boots. I was out there with firefighters with the boots. We were stopping cars. We were soliciting contributions. The Welland volunteer firefighters have always been—you tell me if I'm wrong—number one with their boot drive. You bet your boots. They've always been around number one in terms of the amount of funds they raise. I was with them in 2000. We were ready for anything. If they were going to cuff us, print us, mug-shot us and throw us into the cells, let 'er go.

In August of this year—because, again, this happens just before Labour Day; it is part of all that fundraising activity that takes place around the Labour Day weekend or just preceding it. I had to tell the volunteer firefighters—Steve Pandur should be here today talking to this bill, because he would leave a distinct impression on you. He lives up on Highway 58, on Merrittville Road. He's on the east side there just before Hurricane: an incredibly hard-working guy and also an enthusiastic volunteer firefighter. He's out there all the time as a volunteer firefighter, in fundraising activities. If there's a charity event going on, Steve Pandur is there. I don't know where he finds the time, but he does. Steve Pandur is there because he plays a major role. Again, he would caution me not to refer only to him, because there's a whole bunch of people, women and men. Firefighters come in from Port Robinson, from Thorold, to participate in this street corner fundraiser.

This year they knew I couldn't be with them. I was out of the country. I was on that human rights tour that I told you about before. They knew that. I get back to town and find out that sure enough, it took one wacko, one nutbar, to call the police, and the police are apologetically telling the firefighters out there on the corner, "Look, guys, we don't want to do this. Our attention had been diverted in previous years, but unfortunately, this wacko compelled us to come out here," and the firefighters had to shut down their fundraising campaign.

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I tell you that I estimate that out of that campaign alone in Welland, just at that street corner opposite the Welland Tribune office, MD lost a few thousand bucks. You know what a few thousand bucks can do, especially when it comes from community after community after community, and especially when you've got a government that's less and less interested in funding the sorts of things—the research and support—that these associations provide? I'm looking over here, because here are some of the folks who know bang on. They know. They live it.

At the end of the day, don't blame the Welland cops. Don't blame number 3 division and the division commander. They did everything they could. Don't even blame the wacko who called them; we're never going to rid ourselves of the kind of nutbar who would complain about—well, you can't. It's volunteer firefighters doing a fundraising campaign. I've got to commend my friends who were out there. They demonstrated pacifist tendon-

cies, because they knew who called the police. They demonstrated great discipline and restraint; their Ghandian sentiments prevailed. It's just as well that I wasn't there because, although I'm a peace-loving person, I think I would have shared the incredible anger they had.

The fact is that this was all put to the Attorney General and the government in the debate around this stupid bill—not the bill we're debating today; the bill we're amending. It's a stupid bill. It doesn't solve any problem. In fact, what it has done is create problems, because now we've got courtrooms, overtaxed here in the city of Toronto, as they are across the province. I've raised, over the course of the last week and a half, incident after incident of plea bargaining where, because of the backlogs, because of the incredible jams in the courts, second-degree murder charges are being plea bargained down to manslaughter with six-year sentences. We saw another one this morning. Did you read that? Once again, second-degree murder sounded pretty good to me. I mean, you've got a dead body, you've got a confession and it was a domestic murder; in this case it was two men. A gay man was murdered, and his life was worth six years in a plea bargain?

I know the crown attorney in that case. He's a good crown attorney, a very competent one, a very skilled one. That makes it all the more telling, because when skilled, competent crown attorneys feel compelled to plea bargain second-degree murders down to mere manslaughter and then agree to six-year sentences to boot, it means that it isn't an idiosyncrasy, it isn't one disinterested crown here or there. It means there's a systemic problem. It means the courts are in serious trouble. It means the criminal justice system is in serious trouble because it's backlogged.

So how does this government address that? Well, they create a new law so now cops can occupy their time busting kids with a lot of earrings and green hair and a squeegee in a bucket and load up the courts with that stuff, as if the police aren't already overly taxed in terms of the sorts of things they've got to do. The squeegee bill is a stupid bill. It hasn't solved any problems; it's created problems.

The bill before us today starts to solve some of those problems. But let me put this to you. If I have any concerns at all—and I say this to the author of the bill in the most benign way, and I hope the bill does pass, I really do, because I qualitatively can't distinguish between, yes, a legitimate charity and a poor person who's homeless asking for a loonie. I support the bill today. I agree with it. It's the beginning of the repeal of the squeegee bill. Again, I don't quarrel with the author of the bill at all. I have a private member's bill that would repeal the whole squeegee bill and get rid of the whole stupid mess the government has created. If we're going to deal with homelessness, let's deal with homelessness in a pragmatic way of addressing the issues of poverty. But I have as much regard for a sad soul on our streets pleading for a loonie so they can feed themselves that

day as I do for the great work done by the volunteer firefighters.

That's why I'm supporting the bill and that's why I'm encouraging all of us—all of us—to step back for a minute and understand that our job is not to create more problems; our job should be to help solve problems. If Steve Pandur were here today, he would make a distinct impression. I suspect he'd want to talk to the parliamentary assistant privately, and they'd have a good conversation. He'd be talking, not to MPPs—don't forget, the minimum wage here is \$78,000-plus a year, and there is but a handful of people who don't make more than that because of the way perks are added on to the salaries here. There's nary a volunteer firefighter who makes that kind of income—there may be some who do; I won't quarrel with that. There's nary a person living with muscular dystrophy who makes that kind of income, and there are thousands of homeless people in this province whose reality, whose lives and whose circumstances don't even permit them to dream about that kind of income.

Let's understand that it's hard-working, good folks out there who do the good things like the boot campaign by firefighters, like Goodfellows, as has already been talked about, like any number of—like university students who are out there too raising money, doing clever stunts, stunts that attract attention. Cut the crap about this being a public safety bill. Please. The Highway Traffic Act deals with any issue around public safety and the use of the roadways. It has nothing to do with public safety. It was this government's attack on homeless people and on squeegee kids, and at the end of the day they threw a net so wide that they picked up volunteer firefighters and muscular dystrophy campaigns as well.

Mr Tilson: I'd like to speak to the bill as introduced by Mr Crozier, the member from Essex. I will be speaking against the bill.

Mr Crozier: Why doesn't that surprise me?

Mr Tilson: Well, there are always people for and against, and I have to be against this particular bill. However, I do admire the determination by the member from Essex. He introduced this bill, as he stated, about a year ago, in April 2000, I believe. I expect it will be controversial today, as it was then. The vote was tied, and you, Mr Speaker, in your capacity as Speaker, broke that tie on second reading, which was quite appropriate for you to do, and I think the bill was assigned to the general government committee; I don't know whether it ever reached the committee. I agree, it did die on the order paper. Although I will be speaking against it, I again congratulate the member on his determination to bring this issue forward.

I'd like to remind the House what the intention was. My friend the member for Niagara Centre gave his interpretation of the Safe Streets Act, and I'd like to now give the government's interpretation of the Safe Streets Act. Its main purpose is to keep our streets safe. It's to prevent car accidents. It's to prevent motor vehicles from colliding with one another. It's to prevent motor vehicles from colliding with pedestrians.

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The Safe Streets Act, as well, responds to requests for government action from municipalities, police, business and residents. The member over there doesn't like this, but if he does recall the history of the Safe Streets Act, we did receive a number of requests from municipalities all across this province on the problems that he has reiterated. It responds to requests to curb aggressive solicitation on Ontario streets. Aggressive solicitation, often experienced as squeegeeing and panhandling, had been reported as a problem across this province.

The act fulfills a promise that was made by this government in its Blueprint, a promise to stop aggressive solicitation and squeegee activity and to protect people's ability to use public places in a safe and secure manner. The act regulates certain activities by creating new provincial offences and amending the provisions of the Highway Traffic Act. It gives police the power to arrest and the courts the ability to fine offenders and sentence repeat offenders to jail.

The Safe Streets Act bans aggressive solicitation, soliciting in situations where people are not free to walk away—it bans those situations—it bans the disposal of objects, such as hypodermic syringes and needles, without taking reasonable precaution in parks, schoolyards and other public spaces.

Bill 26, as introduced by the member for Essex, Mr Crozier, as he has indicated, wishes to amend section 3 of the Safe Streets Act to provide an exemption from the act's prohibition against captive-audience solicitation. That's solicitation that would occur in situations where people are not free to walk away, for example—and the member won't like the example—solicitation in a phone booth. That's another intent of what the bill is, and, of course, Mr Crozier wishes to change that somewhat.

This exemption under Bill 26 would apply to fund-raising activities by registered charities which would also be permitted by municipal bylaws or by a resolution of that municipal council in that particular municipality.

Bill 26 also proposes a similar exemption to section 177 of the Highway Traffic Act, which currently prohibits a person on a roadway from soliciting persons in motor vehicles.

It's the government's position that there's no reason why this Legislature should treat persons who are soliciting for a third party, even a charity, any differently than persons who are soliciting for themselves. If the soliciting is carried out in an aggressive manner or if the person is soliciting in a captive-audience situation, including soliciting a motorist stopped in a car on the roadway, then public safety, including that of the solicitor, may be put at risk. The Safe Streets Act is concerned with the ability of the public to use Ontario streets in a safe and secure manner. In fact, under the Highway Traffic Act, it has always been an offence for someone on a roadway to stop or attempt to stop any vehicle to offer or provide any commodity or service to anyone in a vehicle. That's always been the law. The Safe Streets Act does nothing to change that. Such activity raises safety concerns.

With regard to the Highway Traffic Act, the Safe Streets Act simply amends it further and prohibits a person from approaching on a roadway a stopped vehicle for the purposes of solicitation.

It should be noted that the Highway Traffic Act does not prevent someone from soliciting money if the person soliciting is on a sidewalk, shoulder, boulevard, median or other place that is not a highway. The Safe Streets Act doesn't prevent this either.

Raising funds for charities and increasing public awareness of charitable causes are important and worthwhile tasks. We all know that. I know the intent of the member for Essex is to help charities, and we want to help them too. I know he's sincere in that effort. It's my hope, and indeed this government's hope, that charities will work with their local police service boards and police officers in planning charity events that are in compliance with the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act. Many charities are already doing this.

It must also be noted that there is currently a constitutional challenge with respect to the Safe Streets Act before the courts. Some people who had been arrested for violating the provisions of the act challenged the legislation, and that went to court. The Safe Streets Act is intended to address aggressive squeegeeing and soliciting activities and to protect the people's right to use public places.

On August 3 of this year, the Ontario Court of Justice released its ruling and upheld the constitutionality of this legislation. The court found all of those accused guilty. On August 14 of this year, the appellants appealed this matter. I expect it will be heard in March. As we all know, because this matter is before the courts, it would be inappropriate for anyone in this House, particularly anyone on the government side, to comment further on that particular case, but it is under appeal.

With regard to this bill, I would respectfully submit that it's unnecessary, that current legislation not only protects the people's right to use public places and ensures the safety of Ontario's roadways, but also ensures that charitable organizations can continue to conduct fundraising activities. They can do so by working with their local police services in planning charitable events that are in compliance with the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act.

So again, I remind all of us in this House that the safety of the streets is most important. When you're voting for that bill, I ask that you remind yourself as to what the intent of the Safe Streets Act, as I have outlined, is. I would therefore suggest that all members of this House defeat, with respect to the member for Essex, his bill.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): Congratulations to the member for Essex for his perseverance. This bill is a big legislative squeegee brought in here to help wipe the egg off the face of this government for plowing ahead with a squeegee bill that is hurting charities in Ontario. This bill has received the support of this House before. I say to members who are maybe watching this debate, and

I hope you are, I hope that you have the courage of your convictions to come back and support this bill again for the sake of these charities. Right now I look out into this Legislature and I see only, with an exception, the reservoir dogs of the phony crackdown caucus in the government. That causes me great concern.

We told this government during debate and during committee hearings that this bill, the sweep-it-under-the-rug law, was going to negatively impact charities. The government was told and yet they said, "We know better." Check the Hansard.

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Attorney General Flaherty initially denied the fact that it was going to make any difference and then he changed his tune. He said, "No, no, no, everybody must obey the law," I guess even stupid laws.

Staff Sergeant Dave Rossell, a spokesperson for Windsor Police Service, said, "We can't pick and choose which laws we want to enforce and those we don't." The government was told this law was going to crack down on charities, and yet they said, "We know better," and they proceeded further.

Then, of course, it hit the fan. The government thought that police and crown prosecutors would exercise discretion and not prosecute charities. That was their assumption. They thought, "Ah, well, whatever. Maybe that's what the law says. We'll just proceed anyway"—the dogmatism of these reservoir dogs in the phony crackdown caucus. But what did happen, that they didn't expect, was that municipal town councils would be advised by their municipal lawyers that they can't give permits for charities to conduct this activity for the simple reason that it's against the law. So we saw it happen.

In London, the University of Western Ontario was told that they would have to find alternative means in their efforts to raise money for charities. Then we found out, of course, that the Shinerama was not going to be able to proceed with charitable activities. Firefighters across Ontario who conduct boot drives to raise funds for research into neuromuscular disorders were told that their fundraising activities were banned by the bill. Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, which raised \$5,000 for the Herbie Fund before this sweep-it-under-the-rug act came in, was told that the boot drives would have to end and that they'd have to find other alternatives. We know the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada is expected to lose something along the lines of three quarters of a million to a million dollars every year. You were told that by these charities.

Then the Attorney General did something which I think he thought was quite clever. The Attorney General wrote a letter—as if they could take that letter to the bank; as if the charities could take the letter to the municipal councils and say, "Look. The Attorney General has ruled on this matter." I know because I talked to many of them. They thought this was some very significant event, that the Attorney General had ruled on the matter. What they didn't know was that the Attorney General is just a litigant, is just one voice in our judicial system and not

infallible. Win some; lose some. If the Chief Justice of Ontario made a ruling—or any judge, for that matter—that this would not impact charities, that would be different. That would be the law. I think it was a little bit pernicious, at best, for the Attorney General to try and paper it over with that letter. They took that letter to those councils and they took it to those charities and they found that it was basically not worth the paper it was printed on. Yet the government said, “We still know better. We’ve now been told several times—it’s now been proven—that charities are being negatively impacted, but we’re going to proceed with this anyway”—those dogmatic reservoir dogs in the phony crackdown caucus.

Then along comes the member for Essex’s bill. Everybody knows this is a big booboo for this government, “So let’s fix it.” So the members came in here and said, “We’re going to fix it.” The government continued with its dogmatism, but that’s what we’ve come to expect of the Harris government.

But the members of this House came in and said, “We’re going to fix it,” and they did. Of course it got on the order paper, and now we have the opportunity to tell the executive, I say to you members of this House, yet again, that this problem must be fixed.

I asked a question of the Premier—it may be the only time I ever got to ask Mike Harris a question: “Premier, you know very well that clause 3(2)(f) of the squeegee bill means that Shinerama, the muscular dystrophy association, and all other charities that raise money on street corners cannot solicit for charitable donations.” The Premier denied it. He denied it. That was April 10, 2000. We have people here in the gallery, and we have a multitude of evidence presented by the member from Essex which makes it clear, and we all know it’s clear, and I didn’t hear a word from the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General to deny the fact—the fact—that these charities are being cracked down on by this bill. Nobody is denying it. I haven’t heard it. The Premier denied it in April, but then of course he found out that it’s true. Yet the government still continues to take the position that they’re not going to admit a mistake has been made and they’re going to continue to punish charities to fulfill some phony crackdown promise.

Then it happened again. We had an event in Welland on August 25, 2001, where a fire fundraiser was shut down. So we’re back. The member for Essex is back. He’s back to say to you, “The problem persists. The charities continue to be punished, and it’s an opportunity now for us to fix this.”

If you want to vote against this bill, then what you are saying is that we’re making this up, that the member for Essex is just making this up, that the members in the gallery are just making it up. If you vote against this bill, I want you to cast your eyes over to Messrs Henderson, Savoie and Metzloff. Think upon those who receive the benefit of these charitable activities and tell them that they’re just making this up. Tell the firefighters that they’re just making this up. Tell the town councils that aren’t providing the permits that they’re just making it

up. Tell the police that they’re just making it up. This government continues to make it up as they go along.

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): You’re making it up.

Mr Bryant: I’m told I’m making this up. I’ve been told by the Minister of Correctional Services. I say to the Minister of Correctional Services, are you telling me that the muscular dystrophy association is lying? Are you saying that they’re lying? You’re lying, I say to the minister of corrections. You’re lying.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member will have to withdraw.

Mr Bryant: I withdraw.

I say to the members of this House, don’t listen to these reservoir dogs. Don’t listen to these reservoir dogs championing this phony crackdown. Do the right thing, in the name of the firefighters raising money for these charities and support this law.

Mr Wayne Wetlaufer (Kitchener Centre): On a point of order, Speaker: Since when is the phraseology “reservoir dogs” parliamentary in this House?

The Acting Speaker: It may cause some discomfort. I don’t think it’s out of order, however.

Mr Kormos: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If I could ask the member to withdraw that. For him to refer to these people as “reservoir dogs” is an insult to Quentin Tarantino.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The member for St Paul’s.

Mr Bryant: In the rush of my closing, as I said, I ask members of this House to accept the submissions of those charities that in fact we need to change this bill. For the sake of those who benefit, do it. I ask this House to support the bill.

Mr Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford): I’m very pleased to join in the debate this morning. I understand what the member from Essex is trying to accomplish. But in my riding of Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford, I fully witnessed the Georgian College students out doing their Shinerama activities earlier this year and I can say that we had no problems whatsoever because they weren’t out on the roadway. If they’d been out on the roadway, impinging and getting in the way of traffic, everybody would have a problem. But they respected the law and conducted their activities in a safe manner.

I can understand what the intent of the member is here, but the practicalities of it do not make sense in terms of a mechanism to make sure that this can work for the police in administering it, in terms of enforcing it. The Highway Traffic Act does not prevent someone from soliciting money if the person soliciting is on a sidewalk, shoulder, boulevard, median or other place that is not a roadway. The Safe Streets Act doesn’t prevent this either.

1050

What we’re dealing with here is to make sure that the activities of anyone are not conducted on a roadway. Quite frankly, I cannot for the life of me understand what the members opposite are complaining about in terms of safety and what the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act are dealing with. The Highway Traffic Act

has always prevented activity of any nature that would impede traffic flow and put the public in danger. What the member is proposing here is exempting certain groups from that type of activity. I don't think any group wants to be involved in charitable activities or any type of activity that puts them in danger and puts them on a roadway.

It must be said that this government appreciates the good work voluntary organizations do by raising money for charitable organizations. We recognize how much these activities contribute to the well-being and strength of Ontario communities, and it's this government's hope that charities will continue this good work by co-operating with their local police services to plan charity events that are in compliance with the Safe Streets Act and the Highway Traffic Act. Many charities are already doing that.

Certainly in my riding I see a lot of charitable activities going on. I'm involved in a lot of them. But never would you see activities being conducted out on the roadway. So why would we be proposing something reckless, I would say, and certainly not in the public's interest in terms of safety? We don't want to put people at risk and nobody wants to put themselves at risk by conducting any kind of activity out in a roadway. Why would you exempt any activity that would put the public at risk and that at best you could say is a reckless piece of legislation, just pure political politicking?

The intent of the Safe Streets Act, in terms of what it was trying to do, it has accomplished in terms of aggressive panhandling and squeegeeing activities. The Highway Traffic Act has always prohibited activity in a roadway. So why would we support this legislation, which would permit such activity in a roadway? That's what I'm going to continue to emphasize: why would you exempt any group and why would you permit any activity to be conducted in a roadway?

Depending on the community and depending on what type of activity is being conducted—I have had no problems in my riding, none whatsoever, in terms of the charitable groups and how they're conducting themselves in a safe manner to reach out to the public and make sure they're—

Mr Bryant: You should get out sometime.

Mr Tascona: I'm out a lot, Mr Bryant, a lot. I can tell you, all you're talking about is nonsense, total nonsense, member for St Paul's. You've got to work together with your local police and respect your local police, and that's what we do in our riding.

Hon Mr Sampson: On a point of order, Speaker: I would not like us to proceed any further today without knowing that there are some students from two schools who have journeyed quite a distance to come and watch today: in the west gallery, Pineland Public School, from Wellington, I think—that's what I've been told—and in the east gallery, Ventura Park, from Thornhill.

The Acting Speaker: That of course is not a point of order, but welcome.

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): First I want to commend my

colleague for his determination to continue to bring forward good amendments that would make better laws in this province. He certainly has championed this cause and is recognized, in his own community certainly and across the province, for his very worthwhile efforts in this matter.

I want to speak this morning about the impact the Safe Streets Act has had in rural Ontario, legislation that in my community really was not expected to have very much of an impact at all, but in fact it has. I have heard from the firefighters in my communities who have been affected. I just want to make reference to an example.

The member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford indicated that in his riding he hasn't heard of any negative impact. Because maybe in his part of the world it hasn't happened, the fact that it may be happening in other parts of province really doesn't matter. Well, it matters to me. On the Labour Day weekend, when the firefighters typically hold their boot drive for muscular dystrophy, I drove through the community of Roblin and saw two firefighter boots sitting on the side of the road, in the hope—and there are signs to explain—that people going the speed limit will pull over, stop their car, get out and run back to the boots and put in some money. There is a gas station across the road, and I pulled over just to observe how many cars actually did that. In perhaps five to seven minutes, there was none. The boots sat there without the benefit of people stopping to make donations to that very worthy cause. And that has an impact. As my colleague from Essex explained earlier this morning, it has had an impact with the firefighters who raise money for muscular dystrophy, in that they have not been able to raise the over \$700,000 they once did because they are no longer able to stop people on the roadway, people who were always very happy to support the efforts of firefighters.

Yesterday in this Legislature we were the recipients of some very fine hospitality of the firefighters of the province of Ontario. I know there was more than one conversation about this bill and the fact that it was going to be debated today. The firefighters in Ontario continue to support the member for Essex's initiative in this regard—the firefighters, the people we admire and depend on and thank for their tireless efforts not only to keep our community safe but also the work they do to ensure that children with muscular dystrophy will have what they need. Their very good efforts have been hampered.

When the government members say they cannot support it, it begs the question why. How is it that it will have any impact on their intention with the Safe Streets Act? My colleague has indicated that anyone who would exercise such an activity on a roadway would have to be a registered charity and they would have to have the permission of the local municipality. I think those are two very reasonable qualifications.

If this bill is passed, it's not going to enable the squeegee kids, the targets of the government bill, to come out and engage in their activity again. Quite the contrary. That's not the intent of this bill. So when the member for Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford says the members of the opposi-

tion are just complaining, that's not what this exercise is at all. You need to understand that we are here representing the many people who've contacted us—and we know they've contacted members of the government—to say that this law needs to be made better because it is impacting people in a way that was not intended. The member for Essex has brought forward a bill that will enable those people who have been adversely affected not to be. It's not a matter of just complaining.

We have received petitions from thousands of people in the province of Ontario. It's not just our idea. It's not just the idea of 36 people here in the official opposition party. We are speaking on behalf of thousands of Ontarians who want to see the member for Essex's bill supported because it will be a better law for them, for the communities and for the charities in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Essex has two minutes to respond.

Mr Crozier: I want to thank my colleagues from Niagara Centre, Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington and from St Paul's for their support. I also want to thank the charities like muscular dystrophy, the fire-fighters, Kinette clubs, the Canadian Cancer Society and Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving for their support.

I don't really think that when the Safe Streets Act was drawn, those who drew the bill, who were consulted on the bill, sat there and said, "You know, in addition to the squeegee kids in the streets of the city of Toronto, we want to keep Ontario's charities off the roads." I don't think they did that. I think what happened was when the bill came out and we pointed out to them that that's going to be the result of it, there was a knee-jerk reaction. At first it was, "Well, they needn't worry about that. We'll be able to work around that." Then the reality of it hit, that it would be against the law for them to do that and "We can't allow them to do that."

So all I'm asking for, if this isn't the bill to do it and if it doesn't say it in the right way, then amend the bill and say it in the right way. If you don't even want a private member's bill, for God's sake, government, do something to help these charities. They're losing hundreds of thousands of dollars and you can't just say, "Well, go up on the sidewalk and do it." It won't work. They've had a 50-year proven record of raising money and you've wiped it out. So why don't you do something to help them?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. This completes the time allocated for debate on this ballot item. I will place the questions related to it at 12 o'clock noon.

1100

CELEBRATION OF PORTUGUESE HERITAGE ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LA FÊTE DU PATRIMOINE PORTUGAIS

Mr DeFaria moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 120, An Act to proclaim a day and a month to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario / Projet de loi 120, Loi proclamant un jour et un mois de fête du patrimoine portugais en Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): The member has up to 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): It is an honour to stand in this House today to debate Bill 120, the Celebration of Portuguese Heritage Act, 2001. I believe that by the end of this debate members from all sides will recognize that the deep historical roots and the ongoing contributions to Canada by Canadians of Portuguese background make the case for this special recognition, a law commemorating Portuguese heritage and its contribution to the mosaic of our Canadian society. The reason it is important that we pass Bill 120 into law today is so that the Portuguese community may carry on its historical celebrations exactly 500 years after the arrival of Portuguese navigators in Newfoundland and Labrador.

I urge all members to give their unanimous consent to second and third reading of this bill today so that we can honour history, so that we can honour those brave navigators and explorers who crossed the Atlantic Ocean with all the uncertainties involved in that era of discovery, so that we can honour Gaspar Corte Real, who, together with Giovanni Caboto, was one of the earliest discoverers of Canada, so that we can honour and recognize Canada's beginnings as a multicultural nation, so that we can honour the half a million hardworking Portuguese men and women who work hard every single day to literally build this wonderful country from the ground up.

Portuguese people are people who strongly believe in honour. Let's not deny them the honour to have this bill passed on the exact anniversary of their ancestors' arrival in Canada.

The Celebration of Portuguese Heritage Act is a bill that does two simple but very important things. It proclaims the month of June as Portuguese History and Heritage Month and the 10th of June as Portugal Day. I want every member to know that our actions and words today will leave an everlasting mark. Today's Hansard will be reviewed in every Portuguese-speaking press in Canada and read over by the half a million Canadians of Portuguese background around this province. Make no mistake: it was not by accident that Ian Urquhart in the Toronto Star yesterday named me as a key member whose influence could spill over the boundaries of my riding during our leadership process.

We have strong communities in Toronto and the GTA, 905 and 416 areas, exceeding a quarter of a million people in Leamington, Windsor, Sarnia, Chatham, Harrow, Wallaceburg, Woodstock, Brantford, London, Niagara region, Hamilton, Kitchener, Cambridge, Oakville, Burlington, Milton, Guelph, Listowel, Strathroy, Brampton, Wasaga Beach, Bradford, Markham, Richmond Hill, Uxbridge, Oshawa, Elliot Lake, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Kingston, Cornwall, Ottawa and, of course, in the great city of Mississauga, whose people honoured me with

their trust, electing Canada's first parliamentarian of Portuguese descent.

As you can see, every member of this House has a stake in the quick passage of this bill. There are Canadians of Portuguese background who settled in some of our communities even before the Loyalists. They are proud Canadians who participate fully in Canadian society without any bone to grind and are forever grateful to Canada for the warm welcome they received through the centuries.

I'd like to briefly review the history for the record. In the 15th century, Prince Henry of Portugal—whose mother, by the way, the Queen of Portugal, was a British princess—better known as Prince Henry the Navigator, established a school of navigation in Sagres, in the Algarve region of Portugal. That school of navigation, in those days, would be a state-of-the-art school of navigation. It was the first of its kind in the world. It set the stage for the great feats of Portuguese navigators and explorers. They include well-known explorers such as Bartolomeu Dias, who explored the Cape of Good Hope in Africa. It was called the Cape of Good Hope because, by crossing the southern tip of Africa, the Portuguese saw the way clear to make it to India. They were followed a couple of years later by Vasco da Gama, who discovered the sea route to India; Pedro Alvares Cabral, who discovered Brazil; Magellan, who was the first navigator to circumnavigate the Earth; and Gaspar Corte Real, who left Portugal under a charter of King Manuel to discover and claim jurisdiction over lands in the new world.

Corte Real arrived in Newfoundland in the year 1501, exactly 500 years ago. He explored the northeast coast of Terra Nova/Newfoundland. He sailed up the coast of Labrador and named the land Labrador, which means “farmer” in Portuguese, in honour of John the Farmer, who was one of the Portuguese explorers credited with being the first explorer to set foot in Labrador.

Canada, in 16th-century cartography, was often described as the Land of Corte Real and as Terra d'el Rey de Portugal, land of the King of Portugal.

But this debate today is not a claim of jurisdiction but a debate about the celebration of the great cultural and historical heritage that the Portuguese bring as a piece of the mosaic that makes this Canada of ours so great and wonderful.

Did you know that when mail service was first established in Canada in 1693, it was a Portuguese man, Pedro da Silva, who transported and delivered mail by canoe between Montreal and Quebec City?

Did you know that Portuguese fishermen started fishing cod off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1504 and have continued to do so for 500 years?

1110

One has only to talk to the people of Newfoundland if you want to hear the folk stories they tell about the white fleet—the Portuguese fishing fleets.

There was a CBC documentary I once saw narrating the story of a boy, 12 years old, who arrived in New-

foundland as a stowaway in a fishing ship and stayed at the docks until someone took him in. His last name was Silva but the local people thought it to be Silver, so he kept the name Silver. He married there, had a large family and became a celebrity in St John's, as his door was always open for any fisherman who arrived in St John's. He made them feel as if they were part of his family. The children of the Silver family still live in Newfoundland. Mr Silver himself died without ever returning to see the family he left behind in Portugal.

The Portuguese community is a vibrant community in Ontario and Canada, and continues to make significant contributions to Canadian society and to enrich it with its history, language, culture and work ethic.

The month of June, and the day of June 10 in particular, have always been a great time of celebration by the Portuguese community. Celebrations honour the life of Luis de Camões and his famous epic poems, the Lusiads. June 10 is the anniversary of the death of Camões.

I would like to acknowledge here the leading role of ACAPO, the alliance of Portuguese clubs and associations, in the celebrations that take place in the month of June in Ontario, year after year.

In conclusion, I want everyone in this House to know that Canadians of Portuguese background are proud of their culture, history and heritage—proud of their heritage but proud of being Canadians. I know Portuguese people pray every day to thank God and ask God to bless Canada. On behalf of the half a million Canadians of Portuguese background, I want to say today, obrigado Ontario, obrigado Canada, thank you Canada.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): I'm pleased to rise today and speak in support of the bill of the member for Mississauga East, Mr DeFaria. I'm also speaking on behalf of many constituents I have in the area of Leamington, outside of Leamington and in the community of Harrow. We have a significant number of Portuguese residents in our communities, as well as in the city of Chatham and the area of Wheatley. It's on their behalf I'm standing today to support this legislation.

I've paraded with my amigos in those areas on many occasions and helped them celebrate their heritage, and it's always been a pleasure. I might add—I hope this is taken in a lighter and more humorous way—I've even paraded with them on streets and highways, much the same as I wanted to be able to raise money in my own bill.

I visited Portugal this year, one of the first times in, I think, about 15 years that my wife and I have been out of the country and off the continent of North America. We chose to visit Portugal because of the number of constituents I have who have encouraged me to visit Portugal. I found it to be a beautiful country. I visited the Algarve and the point at which Henry the Navigator—or Prince Henry of Portugal, I guess, more formally—created many of the methods by which the Portuguese were able to go out into the world and discover new horizons.

I've always thought, colleagues, that it must be a difficult decision to make—one that I've not made—when someone leaves their homeland, like the great Canadian citizens who have immigrated from Portugal, and comes to another country. Thank God they chose Canada. We have welcomed immigrants with open arms. They have come to our country and they have made it a richer place.

I think we should do this type of thing and recognize those citizens who come from other countries and bring with them their rich heritage. They still want to maintain that heritage and live it in our country and share it with us. I think this is one way we can do that, by recognizing them, by recognizing their history and by thanking them for coming to our country and making it a richer place.

When this bill, I hope, is passed into law, I'll very proudly go back to my community on your behalf and say to the Portuguese immigrants, as well as the many who have now been born in Canada, how much we appreciate their heritage and what they've contributed to Canada. This in some small way recognizes that.

I wish the member well. I hope the bill passes and I certainly will be in my seat to support it.

Interruption.

The Acting Speaker: Unfortunately, people who are in the galleries are not allowed to participate in these proceedings, including applauding. I appreciate your sentiments, but that is not permitted.

The member for Toronto-Danforth.

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): It's true that I'm the member from Toronto-Danforth, but I don't know if people here recognize that I hail from Newfoundland and Labrador, so I have a special connection with the people of Portugal. I'm very pleased to stand today in support of this bill, and certainly I believe it will pass into law.

My mother comes from a place we call Bay de Verde, but it's actually a Portuguese name. It means Green Bay. I would not be surprised if I have some Portuguese blood in me. My mother's family goes way back in this town of Bay de Verde. It's a most beautiful town. I wish I had a picture to show people.

We have a great affinity in Newfoundland and Labrador with the people of Portugal. Still today people speak very fondly of the Portuguese White Fleet of 1930. Many people married Portuguese fishermen. People from Newfoundland go to Portugal. We have very much in common.

The other connection I have is that I grew up in Labrador, although I was born on the island of Newfoundland. Most people probably don't know but the name Labrador itself came from a Portuguese word which I understand means farmer or worker.

It's my pleasure today to stand here and support the bill before us. The people of Newfoundland, as I said, for many years have seen the ships in the harbour of St John's and around the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. There's a lot of poetry and music that we share in common.

The Portuguese people have contributed so much, not only to Newfoundland and Labrador but to all of Ontario. We have a large Portuguese population here in Ontario who contribute greatly. As a person coming from Newfoundland and Labrador and because of the great relationship Newfoundlanders have with the Portuguese people, it gives me great pleasure and it is a great honour to be able to stand today and support this bill before us.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I know my colleague from Thornhill would want mentioned that the second shift from Ventura Park school is here from Thornhill. I want to welcome them.

I'm proud to rise and support the member from Mississauga on a bill that I know he and I spoke about in the past. The reason we spoke was some of the history about the discoveries and some of the unresolved issues around who discovered what. I'm glad the member from Mississauga incorporated both of those issues into this bill. Gaspar Real, together with Giovanni Caboto, was one of the earliest discoverers of Canada. He's combined that, and I think, together with the Portuguese community and the Italian community, we can live with that, knowing that we both had an enormous role in the discovery of the New World.

1120

On a more personal note, I know we all have Portuguese communities in different cities across the province, and in London we have an exceptional community. The home church for the Portuguese community is Holy Cross, and the Portuguese Club is on Falcon Street right off Trafalgar Street. For people today who think that's not a big deal, it is a big deal. Twenty years ago these communities purchased pieces of land, and those clubs started from nothing; they started from a shack. It started with people going door to door raising money to have a community centre or a club. It was no different from the church. Holy Cross church was one that had to be purchased by the Portuguese community, and at some point when the community expanded, additions had to be put on. How was it done? It was done by the Portuguese community going to other people within their own community and raising money.

This is what the Portuguese community has done in all of our cities, along with other communities, the Italian community and so on. I just want to say that I'm proud of all those communities. They're hard-working people who contribute enormously to our economic output in this province and to our social fabric. I think this act should be passed as soon as possible, recognizing their hard efforts.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): This is one of those pieces of legislation that tend to bring support from all political parties, and I think without any qualification or conditions on that support.

I see the member for Kitchener here today. He had a special day that he brought forward recognizing people of German descent and the role and responsibilities they had in Canada. That was approved by members of this House, and we're pleased, I think, as members to give

official recognition in the form of the legislation that we see here today to people of Portuguese ancestry who have played such a significant role in our country.

I used to be a history teacher a number of years ago, and of course we were all students at one time. We remember well the many stories that were told of people from Portugal who had travelled to North America, to Canada, had made some initial contacts here—indeed who had travelled across the world—and spread the Portuguese culture and traditions and shared them with others.

In Canada we're fortunate—because every country in the world isn't like this—that we welcome people from various backgrounds. Very early on, the country was a British colony and a French colony. We had a large French component, a large British component, and they are still extremely important parts of our country. People, however, came from other countries in the world to join us, initially from Europe and of course after that from other parts of the world, all joining the First Nations people who were here before any of us happened to arrive from any of our ethnic backgrounds.

The people of the Portuguese community have contributed immensely in so many of our communities across Ontario. We note a large community obviously in the Toronto area and, as the member has pointed out, in the greater Toronto area. We refer now to these exchanges, which tells us we're a little bit captive of our electronic gadgetry now, because we refer to it as the 905 and the 416 areas. We have to add some, by the way, now that there are more exchanges. But there's a large number of people in the Toronto area and well beyond the borders of Toronto who are of Portuguese background. My friend Bruce Crozier from Essex North mentioned the fact that he has a large community of Portuguese people in his area.

We were pleased as a country to welcome people from Portugal to Canada. I understand there was not all that large an immigration from Portugal initially. It has increased significantly over the years, and to a positive effect for those of us in Canada.

In Tony Ruprecht's new millennium edition book, Toronto's Many Faces—

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey): He's got a new book out?

Mr Bradley: Tony Ruprecht, the author and the member for Davenport, indicates something that I think a lot of people probably don't realize. He says, "There was little immigration to Canada until 1953, when 85 Portuguese men arrived in Halifax aboard the *Saturnia*." He goes on to talk about how, over the years, many people have come to Canada. "The First Portuguese Canadian Club was incorporated in 1956 and began organizing early festivals and soccer teams. Portuguese-language services were first held at St Michael's Cathedral in 1955, while a group from the island of Madeira frequented St Elizabeth's Church at Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West." What he goes on to say of course is that—

Mr Tilson: That book would make a good Christmas gift.

Mr Bradley: "A good Christmas gift," says my colleague from Wellington and many other places. There is some good information in there.

What's important in our country is that we've been enriched by people coming from various parts of the world. You would find it very difficult not to find in any of our communities right across Ontario the influence of people from Portugal. We've been so fortunate, because people have come from various parts of the world. If you look at the names you find in this Legislature—by the way, somebody did a survey the other day; I think it was Graham Murray who did it. It talked about the number of people who were born outside Canada who are members of the House of Commons and members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. There are many, and we welcome people from around the world.

Sometimes when people arrive they have a bit of a difficult time initially, and they have experienced that over the years. Jim Coyle wrote an excellent column in the Toronto Star about what they said about each of us as we came—the Irish, the British, the French and so on—and they weren't always complimentary remarks. What we find, however, as people become part of this country, is that they bring their cultures, their tradition and the richness of that culture and tradition to Canada, and Portuguese Canadians certainly fit this category. Portuguese Canadians are good Canadians first, who want to maintain the traditions they bring with them and share them with others.

I welcome this legislation. I'm sure it will get unanimous consent in this Legislature this morning.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): I want to congratulate Carl DeFaria, the member from Mississauga East, for bringing this bill forward today in this House and for being the first Portuguese Canadian MPP in this place. It's true. New Democrats have no problem supporting this bill and giving it speedy passage, as he suggested. There's obviously no one in this caucus or any other party, I don't think, who would want to delay it or oppose it in any way.

I wanted to say that at the outset, and say as well that the consul general of Portugal is here today in this assembly. I want to publicly say that I'm very proud of the work he does here with the Portuguese community. He is very engaged with all the community associations. In fact, he goes to more meetings than the rest of us combined. I don't know how he does that, but he does, and he represents the community very well. I welcome the people here watching this debate today, because I think it's an important one.

1130

I want to give some background of my relationship with the Portuguese community. You see, I've lived in the downtown area most of my life. I grew up on Shaw Street. That was, I wouldn't say the heart, but it was the area of Italian Canadians for many years. Most immigrants came to the area of College Street, between

Dovercourt and Bathurst to the lake, literally, all the way north. Now of course most Italian Canadians have left my riding. They've gone away—we've got a couple of senior citizens, God bless them. They're all in the ridings of Mississauga East, West, North, good heavens, in the Woodbridge area. They're everywhere except in my riding. I am the lone holdout in my riding.

But I grew up with Portuguese Canadians, so we have a shared history. Italian Canadians and Portuguese Canadians are like cousins—primus—in terms of history and in terms of where we come from and with respect to my history growing up side by side. In fact my closest friend is Lawrence Teixeira, a friend of mine at Harbord Collegiate. It was in his family home that I tried for the first time the pistoês, a very delicious shrimp-patty-like thing that's hard to describe, but I liked it a lot. And homemade is better than what you get in any restaurant anywhere.

Interjection: Where? At your place?

Mr Marchese: No, the Teixeira family. Of course other families make them at home, and I'm sure they're tastier than what you will buy anywhere.

Interjection: Are you inviting us?

Mr Marchese: Mr Sampson, sit down here. Join us here. Come on.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: Order. If the Minister of Correctional Services wants to participate, he needs to be in his seat.

The member for Trinity-Spadina.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: If Mr Sampson, the member for Mississauga Centre, wants to be invited to a meal of pistoês, Carl DeFaria can arrange that, and I'm coming.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: No, I said if you're coming, I'm coming. We can do it together with Carl DeFaria.

Interjection: I want to know the date and time.

Mr Marchese: We can set a time and date any time Mr Sampson wants.

Portuguese Canadians have a proud history in this country. Mr DeFaria, of course, has outlined the history of Portuguese Canadians with respect to them, as they say, discovering that—I'm a bit careful, because aboriginal people don't like it to be said that they were discovered. We have to be very careful, because aboriginal Canadians were in this land before we came—Portuguese, Caboto and whoever else followed. They argue they weren't discovered, because they were here. In that regard we have to be very careful, but it is true that Portuguese and Italian navigators travelled all over the world, criss-crossed the world, not just with their boats but eventually they immigrated to many countries across the world.

They have a proud history, not just in Canada but indeed in Portugal. It isn't just the great Camões that we celebrate on June 10. There are many other people of note: the wisdom of Jose Saramago, the writer who won the Nobel Prize in 1998; the groundbreaking narratives of Fernando Pessoa. In visual arts, I am told there is nothing

quite like the work of Vieira da Silva and Paula Rego. The architectural splendour of Alvaro Siza's buildings, I'm told, is a wonder to witness. The piano player Maria Joao Pires—people wonder why she isn't much more renowned beyond her own borders. The point is, there's great culture, not just in Portugal but what Portuguese Canadians have brought to this country.

We know they work hard. We don't dispute the fact that Portuguese Canadians are great, hard-working Canadians. No one doubts it. No one disputes it. Like Italian Canadians, they have brought to this country a pride in the work ethic. We see this displayed in all the work—at least at the clubs I attend and the work of the Federation of Portuguese Canadian Business and Professionals Inc and their attempts to reach out to young people through the scholarships they provide. We see the work of the Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario, which bring together hundreds of people from various clubs and associations across Ontario. They not only display their own culture but reach out to other Canadians as a way to have Canadians of non-Portuguese background understand what Portuguese Canadians bring to this country. We have thousands of clubs and organizations across this province. We have professional radio and television programs. We have newspapers and publications that don't fit in the hands, so many there are, reflecting the history, the work and the pride of Portuguese Canadians. No one disputes that, and we want to acknowledge and recognize it.

What some of us talk about, however, is that to make multiculturalism meaningful, we should do a little more than just talk about how proud we are that we have Portuguese Canadians in this country. As I speak to Portuguese Canadians, they say to me, "How come we don't have the same opportunities as others to be part of the boards, agencies and commissions?" I'm sure Carl DeFaria on a regular basis mentions that to the ministers in that cabinet, and I'm not quite sure what kind of hearing he's getting. I know that many Portuguese Canadians are saying, "We are just as able as anybody. Why are we not nominated as fast as the others in those countless boards, agencies and commissions?" I know it seems perhaps trite to some or a trifle to others, but it's important. It's important to make sure that we reflect everyone in this country in every board, agency and commission, and not just there, but in boards of education, boards outside of these agencies, in any professional organization you can think of.

I know it's troubling to some people to hear these things. They don't want to hear it. Some argue, "Because we've made it here in this place individually, others can too if they want to." Well, yes, it's true. Some do, but many are striving to get those doors open so they can be let in, and they're finding barriers.

We held an assembléia popular the week of September 24. We had a two-day hearing in my riding where we worked with the agencies in my area to identify issues of concern to the Portuguese Canadian community. We talked about how Portuguese Canadians can organize in

such as way as to make sure that when they have concerns, they are heard by local politicians, provincial politicians and federal politicians, and are heard by governments. It's critical that communities not feel that they are just immigrants but feel that they are citizens who have a say and can and will be heard when they organize actively. So we organized that forum, that popular assembly, with the aim to say to people, "You have power if you use it, and you can make politicians hear you if you use that power."

We talked about health and their fear of the two-tier health care system. They are very afraid of that.

We talked about education, and while many of our young people in the Portuguese Canadian community do very well and get top grades, there are other students from that community who are not doing very well. Carl, you know that. So what we talked about in that popular assembly is, "How do we make sure we get the Minister of Education to come to our community meetings?" I'm convinced that we would be able to work very well with Carl—myself and others who are interested—to get the Minister of Education to such a meeting to say, "What are the barriers that make it difficult for some of our students to succeed?" so that the Minister of Education is seen and the government is seen to be breaking down barriers and seen to be raising the level of academic achievement that we all want. So if there are problems, we can't just whine and complain about those problems. We have to organize in such a way that we will be heard.

We had the help of CIRV radio, a Portuguese radio station in my riding on Dundas Street close to Dovercourt and Ossington. They in the beginning were very good in organizing a series of programs to talk about the issues that affect Portuguese Canadians. I was proud of that initiative and proud that CIRV radio said, "We want to serve our community."

We then followed up on our assembléia popular, the popular assembly, and invited the media people to come. CIRV radio came, with CHIN radio, and they said they would continue to help promote the issues, disseminating information as a way of making sure the public is informed and is involved. We hope that commitment of CIRV radio and CHIN radio will continue, because with their help, people will be better informed when they're given the tools and the information.

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These are the things we need to do. We need to talk about the pride of our heritage, which I support strongly, and we need to talk about barriers that exist in our society that keep some of our communities from achieving to the fullest, not because they don't want to, but because the doors often are not open. So that's what we need to do as politicians, as governments, and if governments don't listen, that's when it is our job as a community to make sure they listen to us, and they will, because communities have power.

Carl DeFaria, I thank you for this bill you have brought forth. We will be supporting it, as New Democrats, and we do it proudly.

Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): I'm pleased to rise and support my good friend Carl DeFaria's act to proclaim a day and a month to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario. The Portuguese have a rich and adventurous heritage. Who among us has not heard of the brave seafaring explorers Prince Henry the Navigator, Vasco da Gama and Magellan, heroes all? Corte Real, with Giovanni Caboto, discovered what is now Newfoundland in 1501, nine short years after Columbus discovered the New World. It was Corte Real who named Labrador in honour of one of his shipmates. The year 2001 celebrates the 500th anniversary of this discovery.

My riding of Cambridge has close to 17,000 citizens being descendants of these brave explorers, primarily from the archipelago of the Azores, an autonomous region of the Portuguese republic. The Azores are one of the few regions in Portugal that have their own Legislative Assembly and government in addition to the Portuguese National Assembly. The archipelago is 1,500 kilometres from Lisbon and 3,900 kilometres from Newfoundland, and consists of nine varied and beautiful islands. The islands are the home of distinctive and unique folk music, literature and culture.

There is the eastern group of Sao Miguel, the largest island, settled not only by the Portuguese but also by Madeirans, Jews, Moors, and French, and Santa Maria, the place of first landing in Europe by Christopher Columbus on his way back from the discovery of the New World; the central group of Terceira, the island of Jesus Cristo, Graciosa and its windmills, Sao Jorge with its festival of the holy spirit—I look forward each year personally to partaking in the holy spirit bread soup—Pico, with its volcanic cone crowned by the Pico Alto crater, and Faial, the blue island; and the western group of islands: Flores, with its seven lakes, and tiny Corvo, the smallest island and the most westerly part of Europe.

Cambridge is a richer place because of the Portuguese heritage. We have two Portuguese cultural centres in Cambridge: the Portuguese Club and the Oriental Club. Spiritual needs are provided at Our Lady of Fatima church, presided over by Father Antonio Cunha. We have a Portuguese newspaper, O Lusitano, published by my good friend Jerry Bairros.

Every year I have the privilege and pleasure of taking part in numerous and colourful festivals and celebrations. Cambridge is enriched by these industrious descendants of world explorers.

What better way to recognize the contribution of our fellow citizens of Portuguese descent than setting aside June 10 and the month of June to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario? I urge all members to support Mr DeFaria's bill.

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I'm very pleased to join this debate and congratulate the member for bringing this bill forward. I too was not born in this country and am a very proud Canadian of Dutch descent. I know that I come from an area of the province, Kingston, which at one time was a very Anglo-Saxon place. It has only been within the last 30, 40 or 50 years

that there has been quite an influence of immigrants from all over the globe. Certainly the Portuguese in the Kingston area have made a tremendous contribution.

Like the situation in Cambridge, most of the Portuguese in the Kingston area come from the islands of the Azores. Many of them arrived in the 1950s and 1960s. I was surprised to learn that there are only about 3,400 Portuguese in the Kingston area, because certainly their influence within the community is much larger than that. We have in Kingston also an Our Lady of Fatima church, a Catholic church and a Portuguese cultural centre. There is also Portuguese radio programming done on a weekly basis by Eduardo Pereira, who's the program director. Also on Cogeco cable television, we have a weekly show put together by Tito Santos, who has been looking after that for many years.

What is the reason that Portuguese Canadians have had such a tremendous influence in the Kingston area? Two families come to mind. One family is a family headed by an individual by the name of Joe Melo. Joe came from Portugal about 40 or 45 years ago. He eventually ran a small restaurant and small gas bar. He was able to expand that into what's now known as the Ambassador Hotel. I'm sure many people from this Legislature, who may have gone to various conventions, have been at the hotel because it is the largest convention hotel in the city.

One of the reasons Joe was so successful over the years is that the total enterprise became a complete family affair. At one time I would dare say that up to 30 to 40 members of his own individual family worked at the hotel. As a matter of fact, just recently he opened another hotel in the Kingston area—namely, the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in the downtown area. What you get with I think most families of immigrants here is that they totally work together. In bad times they perhaps don't take the salary that they will take in good times. They work together to make that enterprise a success. Certainly Joe and all of the members of this family are to be congratulated.

But he isn't the only one. We have an individual by the name of Jack Sousa, who was able to start a very successful construction company. He's built just about every second sidewalk in the city of Kingston over the last 40 years; another very successful individual.

People like Bill Raposo, who owns Bill's Bakery, come to mind. The Portuguese are well known for their many different flavours of bread and different baked goods that they make.

We in the Kingston area are extremely proud of the heritage and culture that the Portuguese community has brought to an area that at one time was very much of a British flavour, of an English flavour, and from which we all benefit. The Portuguese communities have been very much involved over the years in our folklore events in which everyone from the community can in effect taste a little bit of the heritage, culture and goodies that the Portuguese community has made.

I think it is good for us to recognize the tremendous contributions made by new immigrants, our forefathers

of French and British descent and also the First Nations. Certainly I totally support the member in this bill and congratulate him. Yes, let us celebrate, on June 10 of every year, the fact of the tremendous contributions that the Portuguese have made to our Canadian society. Thank you very much.

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Mr Wayne Wetlaufer (Kitchener Centre): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to stand and support this bill brought forward by Carl DeFaria, who is the first Portuguese Canadian to have ever been elected to this place. Carl, congratulations and thank you for bringing this forward.

I want to thank the member from Barrie-Simcoe-Brampton for giving me his time this morning. He had to leave the House and he asked me if I would explain his interest, because I know of the great interest that he has and the great support he has demonstrated for the Portuguese community in his riding. He definitely has attended a number of their functions and he attends the Portuguese Canadian club in his riding. He's most supportive of the Portuguese community.

I want to speak also of my interest. Everybody in this place knows of my interest in things cultural, in peoples cultural.

I have to say that my first exposure to the Portuguese community came in early 1963 when I had gone into the insurance business. I was a youngster at that time. I was in my late teens or early twenties. One of my first calls was a Portuguese man who was newly arrived to this country. He bought a car, and I was referred to him by the car dealership. I sat down at 7 o'clock at night in his place, with all my insurance paraphernalia in front of me. I had my automobile insurance manuals and my applications. He said, "Excuse me a minute." He went to a cupboard and brought out a bottle of wine and set it on the table and said, "Now we do business."

I learned something then because I was always business, business, business. My approach was totally different. It wasn't built on friendship, on warmth, like this man. Anyway, he—

Mr Crozier: It still isn't.

Mr Wetlaufer: It still isn't. Thank you very much, I say to the member from Essex.

This man, we had a little glass of wine and we talked and we did our business. We had another glass of wine. One thing I learned was you don't go—

Interjection.

Mr Wetlaufer: No, we stopped at two. One thing I learned was that you don't go and visit other clients after you have been drinking someplace. I learned from then on that when I would write up insurance for a Portuguese citizen, for a new immigrant from Portugal, I would make it my last call in the evening.

From that man, I received thousands of referrals. I wrote up thousands of Portuguese in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. I even wrote them up in Cambridge. We heard Gerry Martiniuk, the member for Cambridge, talk about the 17,000 Portuguese citizens, Portuguese Can-

adians, in Cambridge. In Kitchener-Waterloo, we have thousands of them as well. They made me feel very warm; they made me feel part of their community. I have to say that my own sister-in-law is Portuguese. My brother married a Portuguese girl—what a lady she is. She's a princess. Do you know that I could have survived in the insurance business just on the referrals that I received in the Portuguese community? They are a very together community. They're a very friendly community, a very warm community. I have a very, very deep respect for the people from Portugal. I say to the consul general here today, you should be very, very proud of your culture.

I get to go to a number of citizenship courts. While we don't have as many new people from Portugal coming to this country now as we did 30 or 40 years ago, nevertheless, from time to time, I still do see some. Their culture that they have brought to this country has made us so rich. I get to go and enjoy Portuguese foods at restaurants and the Portuguese Canadian club on Westmount Road in Kitchener from time to time. I get to enjoy their music.

This makes us what we are today, whether it be Portuguese, Italian, German or many other cultures. We are so lucky to live in this country, where we are not a melting pot of cultures but where cultures can enjoy and celebrate their own cultures and we can enjoy and celebrate them with those people. We are so lucky. The nice part about it is that we have an opportunity in this country, and perhaps it's because these cultures have come and encouraged their young people to participate in and to prolong their culture in this country. We get to enjoy their culture and our children get to enjoy their culture. Without the understanding they demonstrate, without the understanding we also demonstrate to them, we wouldn't have this interplay, and I'm so grateful that we do.

There is a fair amount of pressure on any new immigrant. The new immigrant experiences culture shock. They have gone from a totally different culture to what we have here today. Imagine, however, the culture shock to their children, who want to be all-Canadian, who would love to forget, in some cases, the language or the culture of their forebears. It is only through the warmth of the people of the Portuguese community that they have been able to encourage their young people to hold on to that culture, to hold on to that language, and to share it with the rest of us in this country.

I have to give you a little anecdote, at my expense. I was in the insurance business. In the 1960s, I was seeing a lot of variety stores cropping up in the Portuguese community in Kitchener. It's near the downtown area, the extended downtown area. In a number of these stores, I kept seeing Toreense Confectionary or Toreense Variety Store. So I went to one friend and asked him, "What are all these Toreenses? How many people are in that family?" He started laughing. He said, "That's not a family. That's Portuguese for 'variety store.'" I said, "Oh."

It demonstrated that a number of them had started up in these small businesses. Many of them went

on. They went into the tool and die industry. They went into other businesses. They became lawyers and other professionals. Their children have become professionals. They have become fantastic citizens of our country.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Mississauga East has two minutes to respond.

Mr DeFaria: I am really touched by the speakers this morning. It seems clear from all speakers that we have made the case for the special recognition of this law commemorating the Portuguese heritage and its contribution to Canadian society.

I want to thank all members who participated: Mr Frank Mazzilli, London-Fanshawe; Mr Gerry Martiniuk from Cambridge; Mr Crozier from Essex; Ms Churley, Toronto-Danforth; Mr Gerretsen, Kingston and the Islands; Mr Wayne Wettlaufer from Kitchener Centre. I particularly want to thank Mr Bradley, who has indicated that his party will be agreeable to have the bill ordered for third reading, and also Mr Marchese, who on behalf of his party indicated that his party will be prepared to have the bill ordered for third reading today.

On behalf of the Portuguese community, I want to thank all members of this House. I want to thank the members of the Portuguese community, the schools that were here this morning, and the consul general, for their representation. I see one of our elders, Mr Sousa, who is one of the pioneers in our community. I thank you all, and I thank all members for their support.

CHARITY FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LES ACTIVITÉS DE FINANCEMENT DES ORGANISMES DE BIENFAISANCE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): We will now deal with ballot item number 35.

Mr Crozier has moved second reading of Bill 26, An Act to amend the Safe Streets Act, 1999 and the Highway Traffic Act to recognize the fund-raising activities of legitimate charities.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will take the division following our dealing with ballot item number 36.

1200

CELEBRATION OF PORTUGUESE HERITAGE ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LA FÊTE DU PATRIMOINE PORTUGAIS

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Mr DeFaria has moved second reading of Bill 120, An Act to proclaim a day and a month to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Pursuant to standing order 96, this bill will be referred to the committee of the whole House.

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): Mr Speaker, I would ask that the bill be ordered for third reading.

The Acting Speaker: Mr DeFaria has asked for unanimous consent that the bill be ordered for third reading. Agreed? Agreed. The bill will be ordered for third reading.

We will now call in the members; it will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1201 to 1206.

CHARITY FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LES ACTIVITÉS DE FINANCEMENT DES ORGANISMES DE BIENFAISANCE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown): Mr Crozier has moved second reading of Bill 26. All those in favour will stand and remain standing until their name is called.

Ayes

Agostino, Dominic	Cordiano, Joseph	McLeod, Lyn
Arnott, Ted	Crozier, Bruce	Parsons, Ernie
Bartolucci, Rick	Di Cocco, Caroline	Patten, Richard
Bountrogianni, Marie	Dombrowsky, Leona	Peters, Steve
Bradley, James J.	Duncan, Dwight	Phillips, Gerry
Bryant, Michael	Gerretsen, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Caplan, David	Gravelle, Michael	Ramsay, David
Churley, Marilyn	Hoy, Pat	Sergio, Mario
Cleary, John C.	Kormos, Peter	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	
Conway, Sean G.	Marchese, Rosario	

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed will stand and remain standing until their name is called.

Nays

Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Beaubien, Marcel	Johns, Helen	Snobelen, John
Chudleigh, Ted	Johnson, Bert	Spina, Joseph
Clark, Brad	Marland, Margaret	Sterling, Norman W.
Clement, Tony	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stewart, R. Gary
Coburn, Brian	Maves, Bart	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Mazzilli, Frank	Tilson, David
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Norm	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Molinari, Tina R.	Wettlauer, Wayne
Elliott, Brenda	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Galt, Doug	Mushinski, Marilyn	Wood, Bob
Gilchrist, Steve	Newman, Dan	Young, David
Gill, Raminder	O'Toole, John	
Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 31; the nays are 43.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

All matters relating to private members' public business now being complete, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1209 to 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOSPITAL RESTRUCTURING

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): Today the Provincial Auditor dropped his report in this House, and it's quite interesting to me, as we continue to lobby on behalf of our local hospitals. In Windsor, the Hotel-Dieu Grace stands \$17 million in deficit and the Windsor Regional Hospital stands \$9 million in deficit. What we see today in the Provincial Auditor's report is the Ministry of Health admitting to the Provincial Auditor that they're having a little bit of difficulty dealing with all those hospitals undergoing restructuring.

Here's what the ministry advised the auditor: "Current funding does not allow for ministry staff to conduct a thorough and complete review in each hospital." Of course, that was under the headings of "Reimbursement of Restructuring Expenses" and "Implementation of Capital Projects." The most significant change to our health system in years, and the ministry itself does not have the capability to move forward and assist our hospitals with this change.

We say, no wonder our hospitals are dying on the vine. No wonder hospitals like mine incur additional financial obligations to their banks in order to finance capital construction, because the Ministry of Health itself does not get its own act together. It's galling to see our Minister of Health stand up and say, "Give it some time. Maybe we'll see what happens." People in Windsor are waiting, Minister.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): During constituency week, I attended a round-table discussion in Waterloo on children's mental health, which was sponsored by Lutherwood Community Opportunities Development Association. As I listened and spoke with professionals and volunteers from Waterloo region, I gained a better understanding of the care they provide and how that care benefits all of us. Their method speaks to these benefits, for it is Lutherwood's goal to keep children and families together and to support parents while helping children overcome their difficulties.

I was astounded to learn that 80% of young offenders suffer from some kind of mental illness. We also discussed the fact that a child not treated in time will often require intervention welfare services such as those provided by children's aid societies later on. The earlier you help children, the better it is for them, for their families, for our communities and for the social service net that helps keep our communities together.

To continue to do this job effectively, mental health care providers need our help. I was advised that in Waterloo region and Wellington county there are unacceptably long waiting periods for some children's

mental health services, which is one of the problems stemming from funding shortages.

I have also met recently with Mr John Jones, executive director of the Wellington-Dufferin branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. He advised me that acute care beds are needed for patients in Wellington. At present, children must be sent to London for in-patient care, some two hours from home in many cases.

I ask that the Minister of Health investigate the need for enhanced funding so that care providers in Waterloo-Wellington have the resources they need to deliver these essential services. I want to thank the professionals and volunteers in Waterloo-Wellington for their excellence and dedication to mental health care.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London): I have a statement to the Minister of Agriculture. At the recently held Ontario Federation of Agriculture annual meeting, the minister announced with great fanfare that cabinet had given them the authority to negotiate with the federal government for a made-in-Ontario safety net program. My question is quite simple: what has this minister and the ministry been doing for the past nine months? Proposals have been on the table for months. We thought you were already negotiating. The idea that you're now just starting seems so absurd.

This is late November. The final payment for market revenue, for what it's worth, has been announced. The program is over, yet there are no further announcements. Farmers must be able to plan for their future. Farmers have just come through a disastrous season. Some cannot even afford crop insurance. Yet you say you are only now ready to start negotiating. The federal contribution to safety nets is no secret, but where does the province stand?

The United States House and Senate bill is calling for doubling of the last decade's subsidies. At the OFA convention you refused to talk in dollars. So I ask you, how many dollars do you bring to the table? Your finance minister just can't put a handle on how much the deficit will be from one week to the next. So how much money are you committing, Minister? You're responsible for the farmers of Ontario.

Quebec and Alberta have contributed well over their 40% share for their respective programs, and I'm urging you to do likewise, Minister. Assume your responsibility and ensure the provincial contribution is at least 50% or 60% of the safety net programs.

GEORGINA ISLAND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Mrs Julia Munro (York North): A new family resource centre will open soon on Georgina Island in my riding of York North. The purpose of the centre is to nurture a strong and supportive community and to en-

courage pride in the island's native heritage. The centre will be for all ages and will be home to many different activities such as parent-child and elder drop-ins, a supper club for new parents, a toy-lending library, counselling services, parenting courses and a community kitchen.

The centre's name in Ojibway means, "We come together." A strong benefit of the centre is that it will be able to offer early developmental screening and referral services to other agencies.

Coming to a resource centre on the mainland is often time-consuming and expensive. During the winter with the deep freeze, and again in late winter and early spring with the ice breakup, transportation is extremely difficult.

There will be a specific focus on native culture at the centre. Many aspects of native culture will be incorporated into the programming. Native stories and nursery rhymes will be told in Ojibway at circle time. Elders will be brought in to do storytelling and pass on their heritage. There will be a focus on every season. Every season is special in native culture, whether it's maple syrup time, strawberries, or corn in the late summer.

Congratulations to all those who have worked very hard to ensure the Georgina Island resource centre will be open in the near future.

HOME CARE

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): To say that funding cutbacks to the home care sector in the Thunder Bay district are causing an extraordinary level of hardship and pain to hundreds of vulnerable, fragile people in the communities I represent is nothing less than a gross understatement of the facts.

If ministers Clement and Johns want to understand the impact of these cutbacks, I would ask them to speak to Mr Burton Brown, a remarkable 92-year-old man whose 89-year-old wife, Mae, a woman with very limited mobility, is no longer able to receive even the most minimal home care; or Dave and Lori Pencoff, the proud parents of Thomas, a sweet nine-year-old with cerebral palsy who lives in a wheelchair and who will be losing the occupational therapist who helps him prosper at Balsam Street school because of your cuts.

If Minister Johns truly believes the \$9-million increase the area CCAC has requested for this year's funding is unrealistic or pulled out of the air, as she so cruelly put it last week, then I must ask her how she can pull out of the air the justification for a \$3-million decrease in funding this year. She knows there is almost a 50% caseload increase in our district, and she also knows that her hard-line approach is depriving people of the care they need and deserve.

So today I stand here virtually begging the minister to compromise on this vital matter. Will she not consider providing at least the same funding this year as last year's funding total? Inadequate as that will still be, it will at least mean no further cutbacks as presently scheduled. It will mean a continuation of the school

support program that Thomas Pencoff and hundreds of other children need, and it will mean some level of home care for top-priority cases that are now being told there is no care available.

Minister, will you please open your heart to the plight of these desperate people and find a way to provide the care they so clearly need?

1340

COMMUNITY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRES

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): The government of Ontario recently made it known to the public, although they're trying to hide it, that licensed regulated child care and family resource centres across this province are in jeopardy. A leaked document talks about taking millions of dollars out of the system. At the same time that they are doing this, family resource centres are underfunded as it is today. I met with somebody from South Riverdale Child Parent Centre this morning, and a coalition of groups across Toronto last week, to talk about the possible demise of the local community family resource centres in the city of Toronto.

What the government is doing is announcing Early Years centres. They're talking about giving \$500,000 for each centre in each riding. That sounds like a good thing, and in some small communities perhaps it is. But for the city of Toronto, where we have, in some cases, more than one family resource centre, and drop-ins that are not even included in the list of criteria that this funding would fund—in many communities across the province the Early Years centre is going to be awarded to non-family resource programs, despite their obvious underfunding and expertise right now.

There are a lot of problems with this new system that they're going to bring in. We're going to be standing up and fighting this. We're going to stand up in support of families and children and communities across this province.

ANNE BERRY

Mr Ted Chudleigh (Halton): A large measure of the success of a politician is obviously due to his or her staff, and in particular, I might say to our constituency staff, the volume of information that staff deal with and are required to retain is unbelievable. Changing rules, changing procedures and the pace of change are difficult enough, but add to that the need to recall details at a moment's notice, at the request of an affected constituent, and many people would crumble under the strain. With the demands of these jobs and given the hectic pace, I am very fortunate to have some staff who have been with me for many years.

I rise today to congratulate my constituency assistant, Anne Berry, on her retirement tomorrow. She will be missed. Anne has taken on one of the most difficult jobs in politics, that of dealing directly with case work in the

constituency. She has handled this job so well, in fact, that my constituents continually have good things to say about her and her ability and manner. She frequently receives cards and letters and there has been at least one full bouquet of flowers. A native of England, she uses her natural accent and cheerful demeanour to disarm even the most vehement complaints.

Anne is here today in the members' gallery. She is witnessing the business of this House first-hand for the first time. Anne, I wish you and your family all the very best in the future. As a representative of constituency staff on both sides of this House, we wish you well in future endeavours and much happiness in your well-earned retirement. Thank you, Anne.

BAY OF QUINTE WALLEYE FISHERY

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Yesterday, the Minister of Natural Resources finally confirmed in this Legislature that there would not be a ban placed on the walleye fishery in the Bay of Quinte on January 1, 2002. He also referred to a public process that would include stakeholder groups.

Well, the consultation that the minister has planned thus far is a joke. The ministry has scheduled December 8 and 9 to host invitation-only meetings. While the list of participants will include more people than the October 25 invitation-only meeting, the format again prevents broad public access and participation. When ministry officials were pressed to consider a more open format, the response was that these officials do not have the mandate to change the format.

What makes these meetings even more of a sham is the fact that they will take place in Dorset, some 300 kilometres away from the Bay of Quinte.

What the stakeholders in the Bay of Quinte pickerel fishery want is an open and public process in the communities that will be affected by whatever decision the minister makes. Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals believe they deserve that consideration.

ANNIVERSARY OF OSCARDO

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): Recently, I had the honour of attending the 14th anniversary open house party of a business in my riding called Oscardo, founded by two Mexican-born brothers, Eduardo and Oscar Lulka.

In 1987, the Lulka brothers acquired a neckwear company that was established in 1959. Oscardo's winning collections of elegant neckwear and associated products have since been a staple at menswear establishments in Canada. Oscardo also provides the world with unique souvenirs featuring designs inspired by native art and stunning Canadian images. Collectively, Oscardo goods can be found from the smallest family-owned establishments to the largest of department stores. They are present in retail environments, in private and public com-

panies and in museums, and they're currently exporting to over a dozen countries.

The Ontario government has laid a solid foundation for small business growth by cutting taxes, balancing budgets, eliminating red tape and removing barriers to business. These measures have made Ontario's economy and small businesses more competitive and better able to weather the economic downturn. In short, entrepreneurs have to be more shrewd to keep pace with the growing competition. Once again, congratulations to Eduardo and Oscar Lulka on their 14th anniversary and continued success.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member for Mississauga East on a point of order.

Mr Carl DeFaria (Mississauga East): On a point of order, Speaker: I wish to thank the official opposition and the third party for their support of my private member's bill.

I seek unanimous consent of the House to move third reading of Bill 120, An Act to proclaim a day and a month to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard a no.

Mr DeFaria: Mr Speaker, I understood there was unanimous agreement.

Interjection: Try again.

Mr DeFaria: I'll try it again, Speaker.

I seek the unanimous consent of the House to move third reading of Bill 120, An Act to proclaim a day and a month to celebrate Portuguese heritage in Ontario.

The Speaker: OK, we will ask one more time. Just so everybody's clear, I'll also have the table listen. Is there unanimous consent? We did hear some noes, so we are very clear on that. I apologize.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): On a point of order, Speaker: I seek unanimous consent for Bill 120 to be called for third reading and voted upon without debate.

The Speaker: No, we can't continue to have everyone in the House do that. It has been asked twice. We were very clear. Just so there was no mistake, I did look to the table, so it was very clear. As you know, when you ask for unanimous consent sometimes with the noise it's hard to hear, but in both cases definitely somebody had said no. I'm afraid unanimous consent means unanimous. It was not there and we did ask twice.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Speaker: I should say that the official opposition supports this bill, every member of our caucus. We applaud the member for Mississauga East. If I might, I would suggest perhaps the House leaders meet behind the Speaker's chair to discuss this issue so that hopefully we can deal with this today, recognizing all of our desires to pay tribute to the Portuguese community in this country and in this province in time for their celebrations next week, I believe.

The Speaker: An excellent idea. Meetings between House leaders are often very fruitful and hopefully this one will resolve it. If there's anything I can do, I'd like to assist, but the direction of the House is very clear.

The Speaker: On a point of order, the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Kormos: On a point of order, Speaker: I seek unanimous consent for all three caucuses to address the matter of World AIDS Day.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

The member for Timmins-James Bay.

COMMENTAIRES D'UN DÉPUTÉ

M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-Baie James): Monsieur le Président, en français, si vous voulez prendre votre écouteur.

Je veux amener l'attention de l'Assemblée législative sur le fait qu'hier, dans le débat sur le budget qu'on a eu sous l'attribution de temps, M. Spina, le député de Brampton-Nord—je crois que c'est son comté—a fait des commentaires qui étaient très honteux, quant à moi comme député, contre la communauté francophone de la province de l'Ontario en disant que c'est tous des français qui sont chargés de l'armée, qui sont en train de prendre des décisions, ce qui était négatif dans son opinion.

La manière dont il l'a fait, c'était vraiment insultant. Comme francophone, et en tant que député de cette Assemblée, je trouve ça vraiment insultant de l'entendre parler contre la communauté francophone comme il l'a fait. Je demande qu'il donne son—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member will know that any member can correct his statement. If something was said, we weren't here. I'm sure all members will reflect, and if something was said, I'm sure all members are honourable and they would withdraw.

1350

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I did want to have the opportunity as the House leader for the official opposition to address to you the question of ministerial statements versus unanimous consents.

The tradition of this House has been to allow matters where there are not substantive policy decisions to be made to be dealt with by way of unanimous consent. Effectively, sir, that allows the opposition parties and the government to have an equal amount of time to deal with issues that there is general agreement on.

The associate minister of long-term care is about to do a statement on World AIDS Day. We were provided with the statement several minutes ago. It does reannounce certain things the government has already announced. But, sir, our understanding was, and we agreed earlier today, that we would do unanimous consent in order to allow the parties to have equal time.

You'll be aware, sir, that the rules provide up to 20 minutes for ministerial statements and five minutes for the opposition to respond to those statements. Today,

there are two ministerial statements, which means effectively we are left with 2.5 minutes to respond to two rather substantial issues.

We welcome ministerial statements on the introduction of bills, on new policy, and I recognize that the standing orders, which don't distinguish between new and old, do give the government the opportunity to address policy issues as it sees fit. We had offered earlier to allow third reading of another bill in order to protect our ability, sir, to have an equal amount of time on World AIDS Day, which I think all members agree is a significant day.

I don't believe the standing orders, as we drafted them in 1999, were designed to give the government the opportunity, as clearly the minister wants to do today, to deny the opposition. We'd be prepared to time-limit that response. The minister clearly wants to deny us the opportunity to have an equal opportunity on a matter which is, I think, of universal agreement. The people who sent every one of our members here, sent every member of the New Democratic Party here, sent every member of the government, I think feel this equally.

The kind of pettiness associated with that really, in our view, doesn't reflect well either on the minister or on all of us, for that matter. We offered something earlier today in order to do this. I ask you, sir, to impress upon the government the importance for all of us, on matters of this nature—World AIDS Day is significant to all our constituents, all residents of the province—to please not play political games with this issue. Please don't try to take away our opportunity to respond on something like this.

We had agreement earlier today. We're quite prepared to keep our statements down to five minutes. It seems an unnecessary bullying in order not to allow us to respond or have the same amount of time as the minister does in recognizing World AIDS Day and HIV in all of our communities.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): On the same point of order, Speaker: I want to join in on the comments made by the official opposition House leader. I refer the Speaker as well once again to standing order 35. Appreciating that there's some significant leeway as to the content of a ministerial statement, I'm also asking you to note that it is conditional on matters of which the House should be informed.

I submit to you, and the opposition parties were appropriately provided with a copy of that statement and the compendium, that they are all matters of which the House has already been informed. I put to you that it is for the Speaker to control abuses of the rules, and that is to say exploitation of the rules, especially when that exploitation of those rules would preclude, as the House leader for the official opposition has already indicated, a bona fide address of the issue of World AIDS Day.

Surely members in this House, some of whom have been here longer than I have, understand that there has been a tradition of addressing these matters with equal allotments of time.

There are 20,000 diagnosed people living with AIDS here in the province of Ontario. AIDS is a provincial issue, it's a national issue and it's an international issue. One out of nine members of the population of South Africa is living with AIDS. It is something this House should be addressing far more seriously than as a mere political football to elevate the stature of a junior minister.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Perhaps I could take a quick moment to read standing order 35 and consult with the table.

Members will know that standing order 35 is very broad. I don't have a copy of the statement; I don't even know what the minister will be talking about. Let me say this, though: there has been a tradition where governments on all sides work together on non-partisan issues. When things like this come up, that's why the House sometimes does not work. When we take situations like this and the opposition take sides on particular issues, we end up with a situation where this place, quite frankly, doesn't work. There is nothing the Speaker can do to make it work if there isn't some goodwill on all sides. I hope the government will reflect on that. I don't know if there's anything that can be done at this late date, but hopefully in the future they will reflect on that when they are doing ministerial statements.

With that, we will proceed.

ANNUAL REPORT, PROVINCIAL AUDITOR

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the 2001 Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor, who is seated in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

Clerk at the Table (Mr Todd Decker): Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 111, An Act to revise the Municipal Act and to amend or repeal other Acts in relation to municipalities / Projet de loi 111, Loi révisant la Loi sur les municipalités et modifiant ou abrogeant d'autres lois en ce qui concerne les municipalités.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Shall the report be received and adopted?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1358 to 1403.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Sampson, Rob
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Spina, Joseph
Chudleigh, Ted	Johns, Helen	Sterling, Norman W.
Clark, Brad	Johnson, Bert	Stewart, R. Gary
Coburn, Brian	Marland, Margaret	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tsubouchi, David H.
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Turnbull, David
Elliott, Brenda	Miller, Norm	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Flaherty, Jim	Molinari, Tina R.	Wilson, Jim
Galt, Doug	Munro, Julia	Wood, Bob
Gilchrist, Steve	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David
Gill, Raminder	Newman, Dan	
Guzzo, Garry J.	O'Toole, John	

The Speaker: All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Cordiano, Joseph	Marchese, Rosario
Bartolucci, Rick	Crozier, Bruce	Martel, Shelley
Bisson, Gilles	Curling, Alvin	Martin, Tony
Bountrogianni, Marie	Di Cocco, Caroline	McLeod, Lyn
Bradley, James J.	Dombrowsky, Leona	Parsons, Ernie
Brown, Michael A.	Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve
Bryant, Michael	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Churley, Marilyn	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Cleary, John C.	Hampton, Howard	Smitherman, George
Colle, Mike	Kormos, Peter	
Conway, Sean G.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 43; the nays are 31.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

DEMOCRACY IN ONTARIO

DAY ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LA JOURNÉE DE LA DÉMOCRATIE EN ONTARIO

Mr Wood moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 144, An Act to proclaim Democracy in Ontario Day / Projet de loi 144, Loi proclamant la Journée de la démocratie en Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

The member for a short statement?

Mr Bob Wood (London West): Prior to 1792, the French and British had successively governed Ontario with no elected Legislature. On September 17, 1792, the first elected Legislature of the province met, and it was a truly fateful day in the history of our province. Ever since that day, an elected Legislature has met regularly to do

the people's business. This bill proposes to proclaim September 17 each year as Democracy in Ontario Day. This will give our schools, Ministry of Citizenship and others the opportunity to recognize the importance of that day and that institution.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SANTÉ ET LA SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

Mr Stockwell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 145, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act / Projet de loi 145, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to introduce the following motion to the House:

That this House today recognize the 14th annual World AIDS Day on December 1 of this year;

That this House remember those lost to AIDS as well as the estimated 20,000 people in Ontario currently living with HIV;

That this House affirms its support for people living with HIV as well as their families and to show—

The Speaker: You didn't ask for unanimous consent.

Mr Duncan: As I understand, it was allowed as recently as yesterday that the motion could be read as part of the seeking of unanimous consent.

The Speaker: No, you need unanimous consent. We give some leeway to start off with. What you can't do is use it to make statements in the House, which is what some members can do. If you could get to the point quickly, so members will know in situations like that—but it's very clear that you need to ask for unanimous consent. Would you do that quickly?

Mr Duncan: I seek unanimous consent to introduce a motion that would recognize World AIDS Day on December 1, 2001.

The Speaker: That can be done, and if you do get unanimous consent, you can go into the longer motion. That's the way it should be done. Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard a no.

1410

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm rising on a point of order, coming almost in desperation to you, not that I should always say "in desperation" to you. We've had a report of the Provincial Auditor today. The Provincial Auditor will do nothing about this, because he says he has no jurisdiction.

The chief election officer will do nothing about it, because he says he has no jurisdiction.

Mr Steve Gilchrist (Scarborough East): What's the point of order?

Mr Bradley: I'm sorry. The Speaker over here is asking the point of order. You're not a ventriloquist, I can see.

Mr Speaker, I'm asking your assistance in this regard. We've had sent to every household in Ontario today a piece of propaganda that anybody who is objective would say is propaganda. I'm asking if you are prepared to intervene on behalf of members of this House to ensure that the Progressive Conservative Party paid for this propaganda instead of the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The Speaker may like to intervene on numerous occasions but, as you know, I'm guided by the standing orders. The Speaker doesn't have free rein, and unfortunately I can't do anything about that in my present position.

ACCESSIBILITY OF HEARINGS

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I seek unanimous consent, notwithstanding the order of the House dated November 21, 2001, with respect to Bill 125, that the hearings with respect to Bill 125 not go ahead in the communities where fully accessible services to the disabled, particularly those who are hearing-disabled and those who have no access to the hearings because of lack of time to book handi-transit facilities, are not available.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Is there unanimous consent? I'm afraid I heard some noes.

Mr Duncan: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: my understanding is that as of now we do have sign interpreters available for the hearings in Ottawa, which are scheduled for tomorrow. My understanding as of half an hour ago is that there are not adequate sign translators available for any of the other hearings centres.

Second, it has been brought to our attention that a number of those who wish to make presentations to the committee are not able to access handicapped-accessible transportation because there's been a lack of time to prepare for that.

It would be, in our view, in the interest of the House and of the government's desire to pass its bill to provide meaningful accessibility to those with disabilities to participate in these public hearings. Due to the time rush on this, my understanding is that there are significant gaps with respect to those important issues.

The Speaker: I thank the member. We did have some discussions on this and, as you know, I was aware of it. The clerks of the committee have been involved in this process. I thank the member for bringing that to my attention. I was aware of it.

The government House leader may have some clarification to help with the circumstances.

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I was going to say that subsequent

to this matter being raised, the clerks and the government are endeavouring to do whatever we can to ensure that these hearings are accessible. There's been considerable discussion with all three parties about trying to make sure we have agreements on the committee hearings—the days, the time allowed. As you know, last week we actually—I'll use the word—bent the rules a little to allow the clerks to proceed with advance notice to again help make sure everybody had the time to get to these hearings. So we on this side of the House, and I know certainly your staff, sir, are doing everything we can to ensure that people do have the opportunity to attend and state their case at the hearings. So I do believe they should continue.

The Speaker: First the member for Windsor-St Clair, then the member for Niagara Centre and then I'll wrap up.

Mr Duncan: The undertakings that were made by all three parties—and I take the government House leader and the government at their word—assumed that those in the disabled community would have access to these hearings. In fact, my leader raised that issue in a question in this House some weeks ago, prior to the bill even receiving second reading. We were informed at that time that efforts were already being undertaken. It is now our understanding that notwithstanding that, these committee hearings on a piece of legislation dealing with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act will not in fact be accessible to those with disabilities.

I should also say that the official opposition is prepared to come back in January or February to deal with this, in order to allow these hearings to be fully accessible. It would seem ironic, if I might, sir—

The Speaker: I think you've made your point. We'll go around and then I'll clarify. Perhaps the member for Niagara Centre could quickly add to it. Again, the reason I'm trying to assist in these circumstances is that I know we have been involved and are doing everything—we are legitimately going to try to help. If it is helpful for the point of order, I will listen to the member for Niagara Centre.

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Mr Speaker, I appreciate your patience with this matter. This is incredibly serious because what it constitutes, should there not be full accessibility—this is where I say the Speaker has some distinct jurisdiction—is a violation of the Human Rights Code of Ontario. We, as a Legislature, and we, as members of this assembly, and you, as Speaker, I submit, have to do everything that we can, and that you, as Speaker, have an oversight role that can be played to ensure the government in its very own conduct of these hearings doesn't in fact violate the Human Rights Code.

I do not want to be a party to a violation of the Human Rights Code, nor does any member of this caucus. We intend to recommend to anybody whose accessibility is denied that they promptly initiate litigation with the Ontario Human Rights Commission against the government and against the ministers responsible, but we want your assistance in ensuring it doesn't come to that. That

would be a catastrophe, a disaster and a shameful event, should people in this province have to litigate against this government on the Human Rights Code as a result of this government's attempt to conduct hearings around an ODA.

The Speaker: I want to thank all the members. I want to thank the House leader for the official opposition. He came and brought his concerns to me. We discussed that. I have a report of what's been done. I thank the member, and I'm sure that with goodwill, if we can be of any assistance, and I know the minister as well as the House leader will as well—I assure you that all the resources of the Legislative Assembly and the clerks will be going to ensure there is full access. I know the committee Chair has been working diligently and hard in that regard as well.

Hopefully, with the goodwill of all people involved, we are going to be able to get over some of the bumps and hurdles we have. I say to the government House leader or the minister that if there's anything I can do, if there's anything we can do, to assist in that, we will do that. I'm sure I can say this on behalf of all the members: it will be the intention of all the members of this House to have it fully accessible to all members of the public. With goodwill involved, I'm very confident we can do that, and again I stand ready to assist in any way if the office of the Speaker may help.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): We have again the associate minister of health, who is getting strong legs as she gets up and down three or four times.

Hon Helen Johns (Minister without Portfolio [Health and Long-Term Care]): I rise in the Legislature today in recognition of the 14th annual World AIDS Day on December 1. This is the day we remember those we have lost to AIDS, as well as the estimated 20,000 people in Ontario currently living with HIV.

It is also a day to affirm our support for people living with HIV, as well as their families and friends, and to show our respect for the health care providers in communities throughout the province who have responded to this epidemic with such skill and compassion.

I want to assure the House that our government continues to make the fight against HIV/AIDS a priority, as exemplified by the range of programs available from the AIDS hotline to the network of HIV outpatient clinics across the province.

Indeed, that's why we place health promotion and disease prevention at the top of our health agenda, not only for HIV/AIDS, but also as an important part of our

commitment and dedication to modernizing Ontario's health system.

Through education and public awareness, we want to reduce the spread of HIV. That is not an easy undertaking, but in collaboration with the HIV community of Ontario we have been working diligently toward that goal.

In Ontario, we're fortunate to have highly skilled, dedicated and committed professionals, including community workers, public health workers, physicians, nurses, researchers and other health care providers, making valuable contributions to HIV/AIDS research, treatment and care. I want to note that our government's HIV/AIDS programs couldn't meet the challenges posed by the disease without these professionals and the active participation of people living with HIV.

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I'm proud of Ontario's contribution to the HIV/AIDS fight and of the partnerships we've established with HIV stakeholders over the years. This year we'll spend almost \$50 million for HIV/AIDS-related programs and that's in addition to doctor billings through the Ontario hospital insurance plan.

Among other programs is an investment of \$11.5 million in our community-based education and support program, which is delivered by the AIDS bureau. This money enables the AIDS bureau to fund 60 organizations and initiatives in Ontario offering HIV/AIDS education, support and practical assistance programs.

I'd also like to single out some of the important initiatives this government has introduced, starting with the \$10 million we are investing in three new programs this year: \$1 million for the injection drug outreach program, which provides ongoing HIV prevention education to a population vulnerable to HIV infection; \$1 million for the Community-Linked Evaluation of AIDS Resource Unit, which is known as CLEAR, a collaboration between researchers and community groups to evaluate community-based programs and agencies; \$8 million for the Ontario HIV Treatment Network. The OHTN, as we call it, is a multi-stakeholder agency that delivers three programs which provide research funding and projects that enhance HIV health care in Ontario.

A permanent chair in HIV/AIDS research has been established with OHTN funding at the University of Toronto. Furthermore, I'm pleased to acknowledge the appointment of Dr Kelly MacDonald to this important position. I know she will take a leadership role in identifying new and innovative approaches to HIV/AIDS research in Ontario.

I'd also like to thank the Ontario Advisory Committee on HIV/AIDS, which provides government with expert advice on all aspects of HIV/AIDS. I want to take a moment to salute the committee members and the co-chairs, Dr Don Kilby and Mr Mark Bulbrook, for their commitment to ensuring an effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ontario.

I am proud and I know everyone in the Legislature is proud of the outstanding achievements of the Ontario

HIV community: people living with HIV/AIDS, health providers, researchers, clinicians and community workers throughout the province.

In closing, I'm pleased to reaffirm our government's commitment the fight against HIV/AIDS on World AIDS Day, not only on December 1 but on every day throughout this year.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): The Ontario government is committed to ensuring that Ontario's workplaces are among the safest in the world, where safety, productivity and competitiveness are interconnected. That is why we are introducing legislation today that, if passed, would help ensure the government is able to continue to fully protect the health and safety of Ontario workers.

We are taking this necessary step to respond to the Ontario Court of Appeal ruling, *R v Inco*, which concerned charter protection from unreasonable search and seizure. The decision has significant implications for how the Ministry of Labour inspectors conduct their investigations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The proposed amendments would, if passed, allow inspectors to apply for a warrant to use a range of investigative techniques when they have reasonable and probable grounds to believe an offence is being committed under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The proposed amendments would provide for judicial oversight to help in safety enforcement. When an investigation is at a stage where a warrant is required, the justice of the peace or judge would weigh the needs of the investigation against the charter privacy rights in deciding whether to issue the warrant.

That is why I'm announcing today that the government will introduce legislation which, if passed, would amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act to allow our Ministry of Labour occupational health and safety inspectors to apply to courts for warrants and judicial authority to continue to use a range of investigative tools.

In the interest of all Ontarians, I urge all parties to work together to support quick passage of this bill, so that the health and safety of Ontario workers continues to be protected. I might add that I'm very hopeful, considering the good response I've had from the opposition members. I'm sure all of us will work together to get this through as soon as we can.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): On behalf of Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal caucus, first of all, let me say that we will support any legislation, any change that will help make the workplace a safer place for men and women. Certainly as a result of the court ruling we know that this legislation is necessary in order to give inspectors proper access to the workplace in order to inspect possible violations and carry out investigations. Without having looked at the bill in detail yet, we will support the intent of this legislation and we'll work

with the government to put this through as soon as possible. I want to thank the minister and the ministry staff for the briefing they gave us previous to this.

That being said, we still have some very serious concerns on this side of the House about this government's commitment to health and safety in the workplace, to the funding they've given to properly inspect and carry out workplace inspections and a number of changes this government has made certainly lead us to believe that clearly the priority is not workplace health and safety. Let's remember this is the government that passed Bill 57, that will now allow an inspector over the phone to make a determination whether or not a workplace is safe, whether or not a complaint is valid. To us, that is too risky. That is gambling with the health and safety of workers across Ontario. We still believe an inspector should be able to go to a site and make an assessment once he or she sees the problem, not simply through a phone call trying to determine if the workplace is safe. We believe that would go a long way toward improving workplace health and safety.

Last year, there were 247 deaths in the workplace in Ontario, an increase from 200 the previous year. Forty-seven more people died in Ontario last year than in the previous year. More has to be done.

We had a private member's bill which I proposed, which had been supported through two readings and which had gone through committee, that would make penalties for workplace health and safety violations among the toughest in North America. That bill has been sitting there for months now. This government has no intention of bringing that bill forward. This government has no intention of putting into place legislation that would get tough with individuals who believe it's simply the price of doing business to commit workplace health and safety violations where men and women get killed every day across Ontario in the workplace. If this government was committed, they would bring that bill forward for third reading before the end of the session. That would send out a clear signal that we're serious about it, that we're intent and we all have a responsibility to prevent every single death and injury that occurs in the workplace in Ontario.

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): This year, in marking World AIDS Day, the United Nations has chosen the slogan, "I care. Do you?" It's symbolic of the continuous effort of the United Nations to build awareness of a disease which is truly pandemic.

It has been two decades since the first AIDS case was diagnosed in North America. Since then, it has moved to touch every community and population. It has crossed all boundaries—not geography, not gender, not colour or race, not age. It strips people of their immune systems, leaving them vulnerable to infection and disease. It robs people of their loved ones, their children, their fathers

and mothers, their sisters and brothers. Of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS around the world, 800,000 of those are children. Last year, HIV/AIDS claimed some three million lives.

In marking World AIDS Day this year, there was an even gloomier than usual report from the United Nations as they presented the latest worldwide AIDS statistics and showed a new and terrifying spread of the disease into Russia and Eastern Europe and persistent appalling infection rates in much of Africa. It led the UN AIDS executive director to say, "Unequivocally, AIDS has emerged as the most devastating disease that mankind has ever faced." I don't have time to read the reality of the increasing incidence of AIDS into the record, but just to note: North Africa and Middle East, a 22% increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS last year; South and Southeast Asia, a 15% increase; Eastern Europe and central Asia, a 33% increase. We're not exempt: a 5% increase in HIV/AIDS in North America.

I want to acknowledge that even as the rates are rising, leadership is being provided. Leadership is being provided through research, through the constant development of new hope and the hopes for cures. It's being provided at local levels, where there's a new University of Toronto study that's being undertaken to deal with the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS in the gay and bisexual male population. It's being provided through the creative advertising campaign "Condom Country." I want to recognize it's being provided by the province. I want to recognize that leadership is being provided at a national level through Allan Rock and his work on the Canadian AIDS strategy, and through Maria Minna's work, making AIDS a focus with her work at CIDA.

But I want to also recognize that people living with HIV/AIDS need access to good health care, whether at emergency rooms, through home care or through palliative care. We can't congratulate ourselves on the progress we're making when there is still so much to be done.

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): First, to the Minister of Labour, I have read the act. I'm aware of the Inco decision. I've read the Inco decision and the Ontario Court of Appeal decision. The decision is one that causes New Democrats some concern. I'm speaking of the Court of Appeal decision, a three-judge panel led by Justice McMurtry. It's incredible that that decision would appear to compel—in particular, section 2 of this bill, subsection 56(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act—that a warrant would be required to take measurements of and record by any means the physical circumstances of the workplace, but it very much appears to be the case.

In that regard, we will examine this legislation carefully. I can assure the workers of this province that if this legislation indeed, as it appears to at first blush,

enhances the power of occupational health and safety inspectors to do their jobs, we will be supporting the bill and we will be ensuring that it becomes law promptly.

Having said that, of course, I was hopeful that along with the amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act would have been a response to the coroner's jury inquest into the deaths of Redekopp et al, three farm workers who died in their workplace, a workplace that was not governed by the Occupational Health and Safety Act because this government believes in second-class workers, and those second-class workers specifically are agricultural and farm workers, who have no protection under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. I would have hoped that today's announcement by the minister would have included not only the amendments that he indeed tabled but as well inclusion of farm workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): Let me please respond to the junior minister of health. She stands and purports to tell this House that her government continues to make the fight against HIV/AIDS a priority. New Democrats don't believe her. Quite frankly, the vast majority of Ontarians out there, especially the 20,000-plus Ontarians living with AIDS, don't believe her either.

The reality is that if this government were in the least bit concerned about the plight of those 20,000-plus Ontarians living with AIDS, most of them in the context of Ontario men, among the 59,000-plus across this country living with AIDS, the fact is that if this government had any sense of priority around the fight against AIDS, this government would be addressing the issue of doctor shortages, especially in small-town Ontario, where people living with AIDS find it increasingly difficult to access medical care.

This government, if it had any prioritization of the fight against AIDS, would not be attacking home care services, underfunding them, because the fact is that people with AIDS need those home care services. They are among the huge chunks of our population—elderly, disabled and sick—who are increasingly being denied home care, which is hastening their literal demise and debilitation, as well as hastening their placement into institutional settings.

If this government had any prioritization of the fight against AIDS, it would not have abandoned recipients of ODSP. This government has left ODSP recipients at the same level of income that was imposed on them over six years ago now.

This government has shown disregard for people with AIDS on the day prior to World AIDS Day. Its minister—a junior minister—stands up and attempts to make hay by trying to impress somebody in this Legislature by declaring that there's a prioritization on her government's part in the fight against AIDS. We reject that proposition and indeed say that that proposition does not stand the test of any scrutiny.

It's also impossible to talk about AIDS without talking about AIDS in an international context. I want to in this Legislature, around the event of World AIDS Day, commend and thank and express gratitude to Stephen Lewis as a special envoy, as you know, around the issue of AIDS in Africa. AIDS is a tragedy in Ontario and North America, an incredible tragedy, and the statistics show that the rate at which AIDS is being contracted is increasing. The age range of men suffering from AIDS is 25 to 44. These are young men and women who are being knocked down, who are being wiped out by this epidemic, just as one out of nine sub-Saharan Africans is suffering from AIDS. Archbishop Desmond Tutu has called it the new apartheid.

The pharmaceutical industry, in its pursuit of greater and greater profits and with federal governments in its back pocket, has abandoned these people. This government shouldn't abandon them as well.

VISITORS

Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I would be remiss in my duties if I didn't ask members to join me in offering a warm welcome to the women from St Josephs College school, who join us in the gallery.

CONTEMPT OF PARLIAMENT

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member for Windsor-St Clair has given me a point of privilege and has complied with the rules.

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): Mr Speaker, I wrote to you earlier today pursuant to standing order 21(c). It would be my submission that senior management officials in the Ministry of Transportation have perpetrated a contempt on this Legislature by impeding and obstructing an officer of this House, the Provincial Auditor.

What is it to be in contempt of Parliament? Let me quickly cite two references from the 22nd edition of Erskine May.

Quoting from page 108, on contempt, "Generally speaking, any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any member or officer of such House in the discharge of his duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly, to produce such results may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent of the offence."

On page 125 of Erskine May, the 22nd edition, under the subtitle "Obstructing officers of either House," I read, "It is a contempt to obstruct or molest those employed by or entrusted with the execution of the orders of either House while in the execution of their duty."

Further on it is indicated, "Both Houses will treat as contempts, not only acts directly tending to obstruct their officers in the execution of their duty, but also any

conduct which may tend to deter them from doing their duty...."

In the recently published House of Commons Procedure and Practice manual by Marleau and Montpetit, it is similarly affirmed that it is a contempt of Parliament to stand in the way of an officer of Parliament who is doing his or her duty. Let me cite one reference from Marleau and Montpetit. Page 67 references a ruling by Madame Sauvé, who was Speaker in 1980 when she wrote, "While our privileges are defined, contempt of the House has no limits. When new ways are found to interfere with our proceedings, so too will the House, in appropriate cases, be able to find that a contempt of the House has occurred."

Finally, section 46 of our own Legislative Assembly Act sets out the jurisdiction of this House to inquire into and punish as breaches of privilege or as contempt a number of matters including, "Assault upon or interference with an officer of the assembly while in the execution of his or her duty."

The case of privilege I rise upon today stems from the report tabled earlier today in the House by the Provincial Auditor. In his report the auditor states the following: "For the first time since being appointed Provincial Auditor, I have to report on an instance where my office did not receive all the information and explanations we required." The auditor goes on, "During our ... audit of the Ministry of Transportation's road user safety program"—and he references chapter 3, section 3.11—"contrary to section 10 of the Audit Act, the then senior management of the ministry hindered the audit process by not giving my staff full access to pertinent files, not providing all information requested, and deleting parts of pertinent documents they provided. As well, certain restrictions were placed on ministry staff such that they may be inhibited from speaking freely with my staff."

The Provincial Auditor's role as an officer of the Legislature is extremely important. To quote directly from the auditor's mission statement, "The office assists the assembly in holding the government and its administrators accountable for the quality of the administration's stewardship of public funds and for the achievement of value for money in government operations."

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In order to fulfill this mandate, the auditor must be able to perform independent audits of the government's programs, its crown agencies and corporations without hindrance. That is the auditor's word, "hindrance." To try and obstruct or impede him in performing his audits violates the rules that govern this House and violates, I would submit, Mr Speaker, the sanctity of Parliament.

I submit to you, sir, that the Ministry of Transportation's actions with regard to the Provincial Auditor do constitute a *prima facie* case of contempt. I submit these matters to you for your urgent and serious consideration and trust that you will agree with me that there is a *prima facie* case of contempt.

Mr Speaker, this is yet another officer of this assembly who has made, in our view, substantial allegations

against the government referencing the government's desire or willingness to be held accountable by the people who were elected to hold them accountable. I ask you, sir, to consider this specific case not only in the context of the specifics I've raised, but in the context of the history of the role of Parliament in holding a government accountable.

It is this Parliament, sir, which holds the government of Ontario accountable. When the House's auditor alleges hindrance on the part of ministry officials, in our view he is alleging that our work as members has been obstructed and that in fact our privileges have been denied.

The rapid diminution of the powers of Legislatures to hold governments accountable, whether it be in Ottawa or here or in Westminster, threatens the very element of our democracy. It threatens our ability as a people to hold a government to account in a fair and open process. I ask you, sir, in the name of the history of Parliaments, in the name of our Commonwealth traditions, to affirm this Legislature's right to hold governments accountable through officers of the assembly so that we can preserve the very essence of the democratic institutions which have served this great land so well for so long.

The Speaker: I thank the member for his work on that and for the copies that he did provide to me. Obviously I haven't had a chance to read the auditor's report within the time frame.

The government House leader for some clarification?

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I very much appreciate the opportunity to respond to the honourable member.

I think, first of all, the members of the government certainly agree that an auditor must be independent and an auditor must have full access. That is a very important accountability measure and initiative which this government has many times stated. We have many times supported the auditor, welcomed his recommendations, worked on those recommendations, attempted to do our best to implement the procedures and the recommendations that this auditor has brought forward. We would have no intention of doing otherwise, and we certainly welcome those recommendations and agree with the need for independence and full access.

But it's certainly our submission that in this case the auditor's concerns, as expressed in the report and by the member, do not constitute a *prima facie* case of contempt. I know we've heard this concern raised by the opposition many times before, and many times before the facts have not supported their request, nor have rulings by the Speaker supported their request.

For a *prima facie* case of contempt to be found, there must be sufficient evidence to support the claim that the House, one of its members or, in this case, one of its officers has been obstructed in their ability to perform their duties. In this instance, in the Provincial Auditor's dealings with MTO, with transportation, no such case can be made. The proof is that we have in today's report a full value-for-money audit of the road user safety pro-

gram. It's a full analysis. The auditor certainly indicated that he did encounter some difficulties and delays in the initial stages in obtaining the required information, but the fact remains that he got the information he needed; he got the job done.

When Minister Clark became aware of the problems, he acted on them; he fixed them. He went to great lengths to ensure the auditor's needs were recognized. That is the way it should be. The minister's role is to oversee the ministry. He is responsible and accountable for the actions of the public servants who report to him. If he is held accountable for the problems, I believe he should also be commended when he has fixed those problems.

When Minister Clark became aware that the auditor was not being provided with all the information necessary, he met with the auditor, he called in his deputy and he created a code of conduct to provide strict instructions that his staff should comply with the requests of the auditor. He made sure this code was quickly and fully implemented.

That is the way it should work. What is described in the auditor's report is a commendable step taken by a minister to ensure that the auditor had the information that he needed. The auditor himself, in the report, goes out of his way to acknowledge the minister's timely action and commitment to ensure proper compliance with the audit process. The auditor includes the text of a letter from Mr Clark, which I believe certainly shows the actions that were taken, where the minister says he appreciated "the gravity of the issues" the auditor has raised and that "as I said at our meeting, I am deeply distressed at the matters brought to my attention. Following our conversation I directed the first item of business for the MTO audit committee" to be "the development of a code of conduct for dealing with your office"—the auditor's office. "You will be consulted on the content of this code, which will be fully implemented throughout the ministry by the end of summer 2001.

"As I mentioned this morning, I feel strongly about the vital role of your office in serving the public and the Legislative Assembly to ensure value for money in the operations of government. Fulfilling this role requires that you have open and unfettered access to all necessary information needed to carry out your audit. As a result, I have instructed the MTO audit committee to provide me with an update of their progress...."

"Thank you ... for bringing these serious matters to my attention. You have my personal commitment that you will have no such difficulties with my ministry in the future."

The action was taken, which the auditor himself goes out of his way in his report to comment on. He concludes the one section of his report by saying that "we are confident that the commitments conveyed to us by the new minister and deputy minister will ensure that the access to information problems we encountered during this audit will not re-occur in future audits."

If the auditor felt that intervention was necessary by this House, he would not have made that statement. The

role of the House in such matters should be to act as arbiter and judge when a dispute ensues. It calls into question the rules and the officers that the House has set in place. Where these rules and officers are undermined, the authority and respect, we agree, of the House is diminished and the House must protect itself. But in this case, as the auditor has concluded, his concerns and authority were respected and he was able to complete his audit free of obstruction so that the House need not intervene.

I should add that upon implementing the code of conduct for dealing with the office of the auditor, Minister Clark has shared this code with all of the ministries so that future problems can be avoided. He has indeed—the minister—taken action to address the problem and provided the auditor with the information. The auditor completed his report. He was not obstructive. Therefore I believe that the House need not take further action in this matter as a *prima facie* case of contempt has not been made out.

Just to be very clear, in the auditor's report today, he said: "Following the completion of our audit fieldwork, we raised these matters with the newly appointed Minister and Deputy Minister of Transportation, who immediately took steps to avoid any recurrence of access-to-information problems in the future. Most noteworthy is the fact that they implemented a ministry code of conduct for dealing with my office that is designed to avoid such occurrences in future."

The Speaker: I thank the House leader for the official opposition and the government House leader. I will hear from the Minister of Transportation as well.

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Transportation): Since this deals directly with my ministry and under parliamentary protocol and tradition the minister is responsible for his ministry, it's appropriate that I would respond to the allegation that my ministry is in contempt of the House.

I think it's important that we recognize and put into context exactly what has occurred here. When it was brought to my attention in June what had occurred and what the auditor had found, I actually took the unprecedented step of inviting the Provincial Auditor of Ontario to meet with me to discuss the matter. I felt it very important that the reality of a value-for-dollar audit and the sanctity of the Provincial Auditor is vital and that I sit down and speak with him.

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When I met with the Provincial Auditor, he raised the concerns that he found in his audit, which was completed as of February. I should point out that I believe the ministry staff acted in good faith. The issue in contention with the auditor was regarding documents that the ministry staff believed in good faith were advice to cabinet. They subsequently provided that information to the secretary of cabinet. In March of 2001, the secretary of cabinet informed the Ministry of Transportation that they could release that documentation to the Provincial Auditor. So the reality is, the documentation at the end of the day was released to the Provincial Auditor.

For me to be found in contempt on this matter—the reality is that as soon as it was brought to my attention, I wrote a letter to the Provincial Auditor. We brought in a code of conduct, which has been submitted, and the ministry is now under that code of conduct. We also received a letter from the internal audit division of Management Board Secretariat, thanking me for developing the code of conduct and informing me that it is being moved into all ministries across the province.

So we acted very quickly to rectify the situation. We happen to believe that the Provincial Auditor serves a valuable role for the province of Ontario and for the taxpayers. We corrected the matter with due diligence.

The Speaker: I think I've got enough to make the decision. We've heard from both sides. I will look at the report. As somebody who is looking at this from the outside, though, I've been involved in this on numerous occasions. If it does turn out to be, as the minister said, where he did get involved, all this can be settled if ministry staff know right up front in dealings with the auditor to provide it. We wouldn't need to go through this; we wouldn't need to have ministers go in and meet with the auditor.

The auditor has a job to do. It's beyond me why ministers can't instruct their staff to deal with the auditor on situations like this. I've had some dealings with the auditor and have instructed him that if in fact he does find that he is being thwarted, to pick up the phone and speak to the minister. But, for the life of me, I can't understand why we have to go to that length to get auditors to go to ministers when it's very clear that the ministry staff should be providing it.

I thank the member for his submission that he gave to me in proper time and in proper forum. I thank the government House leader—her quotes were very helpful—and also the minister, hearing from him directly. What I will now do is look at the auditor's report, look in the contents of all these statements and make a decision. I thank all of you for your time.

ORAL QUESTIONS

FOOD INSPECTION AND SAFETY

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question today is for the Minister of Agriculture. Minister, you have, in some ways, one of the most important jobs over there. Your job is to make sure that food is safe for our families. Today, the auditor is telling us that you're failing in your job and, as a result, you're putting lives at risk.

He says that critical deficiencies which can "pose risks to human health" were found at slaughterhouses right across the province. He says that meat is being processed in unsanitary facilities. He says that raw meat is being transported in unrefrigerated vehicles. He says that despite knowing all of this, it often takes you more than half a year to do anything about it.

Now, in my books, I call that gross negligence. You are letting our families down. What do you have to say?

Hon Brian Coburn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): In response, we welcome the Provincial Auditor's thorough review of our food industry program. That's very much part and parcel of the checks and balances that we have and that we have inside the ministry as well.

We have introduced new legislation, Bill 87, that addresses food safety and certainly the operation of many aspects of the checking and inspection of food. Thirty-two recommendations were recommended by the Provincial Auditor, and to date staff have initiated 33 new program directives, of which 15 are completed already and 18 are in the process of being completed.

Surrounding meat inspection, our government has increased surveillance, inspections, monitoring, and enforcement of all food processing establishments. A perfect example is, since 1999, staff have conducted 80,000 tests on a total of 40,000 carcasses for any possible trace of chemical or microbial residue.

We are constantly moving forward with new corrective actions in terms of food safety.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, you have known for some time that our slaughterhouses are operating with—to use the Provincial Auditor's terminology—"critical deficiencies that risk human health." Notwithstanding that, you actually cut the number of food inspectors and you've cut the food inspection budget.

What I am very much afraid of is that nobody over there has learned the painful lessons to be drawn from the Walkerton tragedy. You will remember that, Minister: seven people lost their lives; thousands were made sick.

We learn now it's taking you up to 200 days just to notify the slaughterhouses when they have problems; and then, beyond that, 40% of those critical deficiencies don't get fixed by the time they're supposed to be fixed; and then, even worse, one third of those critical deficiencies don't get fixed at all.

Minister, again, this is fundamental. It's about the health and safety of our families. It's about the food that they put into the mouths of their kids. Have you learned nothing from the Walkerton experience?

Hon Mr Coburn: We have made significant gains and significant changes in terms of inspections. A significant number of our staff provide technical and scientific support. We take advantage of new technologies and new science in terms of food inspection in our abattoirs, in terms of all food inspection. This includes food engineers, compliance officers, numerous scientists and HACCP advisers and many veterinary scientists. On top of all these highly qualified specialists, we employ 139 meat inspectors. To boot, the efficiencies that we have in terms of working with our abattoirs and the efficiencies in the meat inspection industry have increased the number of hours. Every time slaughter takes place, there is a licensed inspector on the premises.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, your answers are cold comfort to Ontario's families. The bottom line is that you

have made cuts to your food inspection budget and you have made cuts to the number of inspectors out there whose job it is to protect the health and well-being of our families. That's the bottom line in this matter.

You are failing, Minister, to do your job. Just like Walkerton, your cuts are endangering families. You have been warned time and time again. The Provincial Auditor has warned you. My colleague here the member from Windsor put the question to you several months ago on this very issue. The Toronto Star ran an extensive series on this matter. You have been warned time and time again, and now your solution under the terms of your new bill will be to introduce more privatization when it comes to inspection of our slaughterhouses.

Minister, when are you going to learn that your cuts are putting our families at risk?

Hon Mr Coburn: In terms of the comparison that the Leader of the Opposition is making to Walkerton, the Walkerton situation was taken very seriously, and that's why we called for a public inquiry into that terrible situation.

We continue on a daily basis, and have consulted over the last two years in terms of developing Bill 87, to improve food safety protocol with the inspection of meat and other foods in our industry. Certainly we are recognized for producing the safest food in the world, and to stay on the leading edge of that we have continued to bring forward new legislation and new protocol to be able to deal with that.

WOMEN'S SHELTERS

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. When an abused woman is forced to take her children and run from a man who is beating her, our society has a moral responsibility to help.

According to today's auditor's report, you are failing these women and their children. You are not providing them with a safe haven from abuse. In fact, you are turning them away, and that is nothing short of a disgrace.

Minister, how can you justify turning women with children away who are seeking refuge from an abusive relationship?

Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues): Speaker, I'll send that question to the Minister of Community and Social Services, who is responsible for that file.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs): We recognize as a government that providing support to women who are fleeing domestic violence is an incredibly important priority. We recognize that certain services are important, and this has been an area to which we have given a great deal of attention. I do want to be very clear, particularly with the comments that the Leader of

the Opposition has made, that women are never turned away and sent back to an abusive relationship.

I will go on and say very directly that we have made a series of substantial investments with respect to violence against women. This government, in the last two years, can be very proud of the incredibly significant investments we've made, not just in terms of children who are the witnesses of domestic violence, not only in terms of transitional steps, but also in expanding the capacity of shelters around the province of Ontario.

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Mr McGuinty: Minister, you obviously have not paid attention to the Provincial Auditor's report from today. He specifically says that staff at one of the shelters they visited advised them that over 1,000 women and children had been turned away during the year 2000. He didn't say that they had escorted those women to some other sanctuary and place of refuge. He said that the door was closed on them. He said that they said, "There's no room here at the inn. You're on your own."

Do you understand how tough it is for a woman, in the first instance, to have to make this decision, to have to decide she's going to leave this abusive relationship, leave her home and her belongings, take the kids, hit the streets and go to a shelter? That's a tough decision. We have a responsibility—that's a word I haven't heard in this House in six and a half years over there—as a society to lend a hand to these women. You're turning them away. That's what this is all about. What are you going to do about this, Minister? What are you going to do to lend a hand to these women and their children?

Hon Mr Baird: I'll be very direct to the Leader of the Opposition and tell him about the commitment which we have given this issue.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Minister, please take your seat. Order. The temperature's getting up. We don't need to have people yelling in anger like that at each other. I know it's a very emotional issue, but I would ask all members to please calm down. I know it is a very sensitive issue, but we can't have people shouting across in anger toward each other. That's not what should happen in this House. We can have lively debate, but please don't shout across in anger like that. It makes it very difficult. Sorry, Minister.

Hon Mr Baird: I'll give the Leader of the Opposition some very specific examples of the progress that we have made in recent years on this issue. Last year, we gave more than \$5 million in increased support to help women escape abuse, with respect to transitional measures. We gave \$5 million in new support to help children who are the witnesses of domestic violence. This year, in an unprecedented step, the Minister of Finance, this government and this caucus provided more than \$27 million to expand the capacity of shelters for women who are the victims of domestic violence right across the province of Ontario. We'll be able to build more than 300 new beds in every part of the province. We'll be able to refurbish an additional 136 beds around the province. We also

stepped up to the plate to provide an additional \$9 million to expand the supports and counselling services for women who are the victims of domestic violence.

The Leader of the Opposition could not look at any two years in Ontario's history and see a greater expansion of community supports for domestic violence. We've made an unprecedented commitment in the year 2000-01 and—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up.

Mr McGuinty: What we know, Minister, on this side of the House, is that in one shelter alone over 1,000 women and their children were turned away, while at the same time you've been able to find \$2.2 billion for additional corporate tax cuts. Those are the facts. That's what people understand and that's what these women understand in the most painful way possible.

This is not the kind of Ontario that I want my daughter to grow up in. This is about our mothers, this is about our sisters and this is about our daughters. You have a solemn responsibility, together with the minister responsible for women's issues, to make sure that any woman who feels that she must leave her home, take the kids and hit the streets has a place of refuge which is sponsored by our government. That's how we come together. That's how we give expression to those women that we're here and we're going to care for them. I'm asking you once again, Minister, why is it that in one instance alone 1,000 women couldn't find help because you closed the door on them?

Hon Mr Baird: I'm going to respond very directly to the honourable member. For that member to stand in his place and to suggest that this government or that I, as minister, would slam the door on any woman who is fleeing domestic violence is just about the worst possible thing I've ever heard him say, and he ought to bow his head in shame. It's an absolute disgrace that he, or any member of this House, would suggest that any member of this House would want to slam the door on any woman who is fleeing domestic violence.

Look at the facts: \$10 million of increased funding last year to expand programs for women and their children; and this year, in the budget presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of this government, \$27 million to expand the capacity to provide more beds, to provide refurbished—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Sorry, Minister.
New question.

FOOD INSPECTION AND SAFETY

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Deputy Premier. Today in Ontario 12 people suffer from E coli poisoning, and the auditor's report tells us why. It's because your government has substantially cut the number of food inspectors and food inspections. He points out that what all this means is that slaughterhouses in Ontario do not meet the health and

safety standards. Rusty equipment, unsanitary food surfaces, transporting meat in non-refrigerated transports: all of that and more has been happening and is still happening.

Tell us how it is that you can boast about more tax cuts for corporations and the well-off while something as fundamental as the safety of the food our citizens eat isn't a priority for your government?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Hon Brian Coburn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I understand Ontario's chief medical officer of health, Dr D'Cuhna, is investigating this case. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, together with the public health units, have the lead in investigating these disease outbreaks. The source of infection is unknown at this time. Public officials are looking at all possible cases and gathering all information to try to determine if there is a connection between these various cases.

I want to make it clear that there is no cause for alarm and that a full investigation by our public health units across the province is underway.

As a bit of advice, I encourage all Ontarians to take precautions to avoid E coli contamination by washing their hands, cooking meat thoroughly, washing all fruits and vegetables and cleaning cooking areas.

Mr Hampton: Talk about someone trying to wash their hands. The auditor says you're failing on food inspection, and you don't even want to respond to the question.

This is what else the auditor said. He said it's not just slaughterhouses. He said that dairy plants and milk distributors are also operating without proper inspection. Sixteen of 46 dairy plants were not inspected last year. Only 30 of 227 milk distributors ever saw a government inspector in the last two years. Your complete failure to inspect milk producers could be a catastrophe. He points that out. All of this is happening after Walkerton. Then you come and tell the people in your new Food Safety and Quality Act that you're going to solve the problem, but in fact in that bill you're going to do exactly what you did at Walkerton: privatize more of the inspection.

Minister, when the strategy you're following now in the Ministry of Agriculture—privatizing more of the inspection—is exactly the strategy that was followed before Walkerton, tell me how you're going to protect the food that Ontario citizens eat.

Hon Mr Coburn: Our government has recognized the need to continue to improve our food safety initiatives, and I'm proud of the significant progress we have made in advancing food safety in this province over the past few years. Our government is committed to strengthening Ontario's food safety system, and we've done just that. We strengthened the abattoir audit system. There's immediate compliance with food safety standards, or they are shut down until they do. We've got an audit on the Dairy Farmers of Ontario's milk testing program.

We've developed a leading-edge computer system that allows us to track in much more detail the meat and dairy inspections so we can take corrective action immediately. We've greatly improved the chemical residue and microbial testing in meat. We've done more tests for more residues more often and get the results more quickly. This is taking advantage of new technology and science-based initiatives to make a much more efficient and safer regime for protecting our residents and our food safety initiatives.

Mr Hampton: The auditor writes this report so you can benefit from it, not so you can deny it. What you've said is completely torn apart by the auditor's comments. He says that 90% of the samples of goat's milk had too high a bacterial content and your ministry did nothing about it—nothing.

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He points out that there are insufficient inspections, failure to follow up on corrective measures, and you don't even have standards to enforce the level of bacteria in the cheese that people eat. He points out that in 1995, there were 103 full-time meat inspectors in your ministry; in the year 2000, there are eight. That is what you've been doing. In order to finance tax cuts for corporations and the well-off, you are putting the food safety of Ontario citizens at risk, something so fundamental. What are you going to do to fix the problems that the auditor has recognized are happening now?

Hon Mr Coburn: As I indicated earlier, we welcome the Provincial Auditor's thorough review of our food industry program. The auditor made 32 recommendations, and that's consistent with the improvements we've already embarked on and are starting to work on to date. We've initiated and identified 33 new program directives; 18 of them are already completed and another 15 of those are in progress. We've certainly strengthened our audit procedures, as I indicated before, in our abattoirs. There are fewer abattoirs, more efficient, and the industry requires fewer inspection hours for slaughter processes. We've allocated more staff funding to enhance our inspection system than ever before. In addition to more than 130,000 inspection hours for slaughter processes, we have 50,000 inspection hours for further processing activities and 10 new food inspection scientists and technicians, the equivalent of 17,000 hours, to better target our meat inspection processes.

We have a strong track record on food safety in this province and we are continuing to enhance that each and every day.

WOMEN'S SHELTERS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question again for the Deputy Premier because I believe these are his priorities. The auditor tells us today that your government is putting women and children at risk of violence through abusive partners because you are turning them away from the safe shelters they need. Eight out of nine of the Ministry of Community and Social

Services regional offices report sending women and children to hostels for the homeless because there isn't enough room for them to receive safety and protection at the local women's shelter. Your own ministry offices—eight out nine—are reporting that. Deputy Premier, how can you boast about more tax cuts for corporations and the well-off when your own government offices are telling you that you are slamming the door on women and children who are in desperate danger?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): I'll refer this to the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs): We make women who are the victims of domestic violence a substantial priority in the province of Ontario. The auditor looked at some examples where obviously more could be done. The answer they got from this government was yes. It was yes to \$27 million in capital support to help expand our system of shelters, yes to refurbishing 136 beds across the province of Ontario, yes to providing \$10 million in transitional supports to help women realize some freedom and safety from violence and to help them get established again in their communities and to more support to help children who are witnesses and victims of domestic violence.

It's an unprecedented commitment. I don't think in two years at any time in the history of the province of Ontario has the sector of violence against women seen a bigger budget increase than it has over the last two years. The member opposite measures compassion by how much money is spent. Maybe he could stand in his place and explain why our government is spending more than \$20 million more to help women who are victims of domestic violence in my ministry than he did when he sat around the cabinet table.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Supplementary?

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): Minister, I'd ask you why, then, are thousands of women and children still being turned away from shelters? That is the fact that was revealed today. Each day we read more details of the brutal murder of Gillian Hadley, and that's all you have to say. A woman leaves her home, there is no affordable housing for her, and they are being turned away from shelters.

The auditor's report clearly shows that women's shelters are not adequately funded and women are being turned away because the level of service isn't there.

Minister, you should have done what the May-Iles inquest recommended instead of faking it with the upload from municipalities. They said you should do a study and look at what's going on out there. You didn't do that. I'm going to ask you now, will you turn back your corporate income tax and give it to those shelters so that they do not have to continue turning away women and children and so that we don't have another Gillian Hadley and Arlene May tragedy in this province ever again? Will you do that?

Hon Mr Baird: Some wanted to study whether we should increase support and financial support to women who are the victims of domestic violence. We said no. We said we would provide that financial support—substantial new support—without the study. We also provided expanded service and support to the assaulted women's helpline. One member who attended the press conference said:

"This is a very important announcement today, and I want to say to the government and the ministers, particularly John Baird who I knew during the time was playing a really important role ... in getting ... support and taking it forward and I want to say a big thank you."

"I'm thrilled that it's here today. I've always believed that when government does something good, one should say that."

Do you know who said that? The former member for Beaches-Woodbine, Frances Lankin, congratulating this government on providing more support to women who are the victims of domestic violence.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH SPENDING

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the associate minister of health. Every time your failure in health care is raised you point to the books and say, "Hey, look, spending is greater than ever." After today, nobody in Ontario should believe a word you say about the health budget. You tried bluffing your health care funding. You have been found out and the auditor has just called your bluff.

According to the auditor's report, this government overstated the health budget by more than \$1.1 billion over the past two years. He declares, and I quote, "The practice of charging multi-year funding to the current year's operations must cease." You have been caught doctoring Ontario's health books. Minister, why should anyone believe a word you say about health care now that this scandal has been exposed?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister without Portfolio [Health and Long-Term Care]): Let me say that this government appreciates the work done by the auditor, and so does the Ministry of Health. The process of using multi-year funding has been a process that has been used by this government and past governments, both Liberal and NDP. This government has agreed to look at that process, to move forward to see what we can do to come into compliance with the auditor.

This is not new at the Ministry of Health. This is a process that has been the process when the Liberals were there, when the NDP was there and now the Conservatives are here. Let me say also that I need to remind everybody that at least with this government we keep one set of books.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, you have been caught. You have been found out. Mike Harris is going around the province and going to Ottawa, trying to pick fights with the federal government, as is his wont, and he's saying, "Look at our books. The numbers speak for themselves."

It's perfectly obvious now, according to the Provincial Auditor, that this is in fact not the case. You can't rely on your numbers. The auditor is saying that you claim you spent \$1 billion in one year, and then he tells us that is not true. You never did. You intend to spend it over the course of four years. He tells us that you claim you spent \$140 million in another year, and he tells us again that is not true. You intend to spend that over the course of four years.

You've been caught cooking the books, Minister. Why should anybody believe anything this government says when it comes to the amounts being spent on health care in Ontario?

Hon Mrs Johns: Let me say that everyone in this House and everyone in Ontario knows that this government has put more money into health care than any other government, and we've put more money in every year for the last six years than any other government. Let me also remind everyone that as this government has increased funding on health care in Ontario, the federal government has reduced spending, from 18 cents out of every dollar of health care to 11 cents, back to 14 cents. I think the real criminal in this problem is the federal government that refuses to fund health care in Ontario.

1520

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): My question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. Minister, over the last few days we've seen the lengths to which the federal Liberals will go out of their way not to contribute their share to health care for Canadians, especially Ontarians. The Ontario Liberals also seem to think the increased funding from the federal government is unnecessary.

Here in Ontario we have been doing our part by contributing to increase the health care budget significantly since we were first elected in 1995. Isn't this enough funding? Why is our Premier making such an objection now? Maybe the minister can answer this: do you think Prime Minister Chrétien will ever take on the Premier's opportunity for a debate?

Hon Brenda Elliott (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I'd like to thank my colleague from Simcoe North for the question. We've been very clear that health care is a priority of the Ontario government. We've increased the budget in health care, as my colleague the associate minister has said, year over year until it's now \$24 billion, using up almost 45% of Ontario's operating budget.

We are very concerned about the future of health care and we're concerned for this reason: as we look to the future, we see increased pressures, whether—

Interjections.

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I cannot hear the member and I sit—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): It's your own member from Simcoe North who's yelling, I say to the Deputy Premier. Why don't you turn around and speak to him? It was the member who asked the question who turned around and was yelling across, and wasn't even listening to the answer. I sat there and watched him. If you had turned around you could have seen it. It was your own member who started it up, I'm saying to the Deputy Premier. The member for Simcoe North asked a question and then proceeded to yell across.

The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs has the floor.

Hon Mrs Elliott: As I was saying, as we look to the future in health care, we're very concerned. We see a growing population. We see an aging population. We see increased drug costs. We see challenges that are going to be very difficult to meet, and it's not just Ontario. We see this all across the country. These concerns are expressed by Premiers in all of the other provinces and territories.

On December 10, after two years, the federal government is going to deliver a budget. Our requests are very simple: we would like the federal government to listen to Ontarians and Canadians and make health care—

The Speaker: Order. The minister's time's up. Supplementary?

Mr Dunlop: I know that you attended the annual Premiers' conference in Victoria this past August with our Premier. At that conference, all of the Premiers were unanimous in asking the federal government to increase funding to health care. While we wait for Mr Romanow's report, not expected for another year, what can we do to continue to put pressure on the federal government so that they understand that excellent health care remains a priority for all Ontarians, and indeed for all Canadians?

Hon Mrs Elliott: It is a challenge. All of the Premiers across the country have spoken to the federal government and indicated that they speak with one voice asking for increased federal spending in health care. As my colleague said, it was 18 cents, it went down under Prime Minister Chrétien to 11, up to 14. We're saying now, on December 10, in the federal budget, increase the spending to 18 cents plus an escalator.

It's very simple if you think of it in this way: medicare was established under a 50-50 arrangement. Right now in Ontario we spend \$750 per second on health care. What does the federal government contribute? One hundred and seven dollars, not even close to a 50-50 arrangement.

My colleagues across the way in the Liberal caucus are asking the federal government to increase tax room for Ontario. That's code for increased taxes for health care. We're saying to the federal government, "Pay your fair share and respond to the priority of Ontarians, which is health care."

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is for the Minister of Transportation. My leader today raised questions about the government's responsi-

bility to make sure our food is safe. I want to talk to you about your responsibility to make sure our highways are safe. The Provincial Auditor today indicated he's quite concerned about this and drives with considerable more care than he used to.

One instance he quotes is that while our hard-working police forces—and today they are out in the RIDE program—are issuing summonses to people who are caught drinking and driving to suspend their licence, your ministry, the Harris government, bungles it. The auditor points out that there were at least 400 people in the last year whose licence the police suspended, but in seven days, because of your bungling, that suspension was rescinded. Can you possibly defend how you could let this happen—400 drunk drivers back on the road because you and your ministry bungled their licence suspension?

Hon Brad Clark (Minister of Transportation): I want to thank the honourable member for the question. To start off with, I'd like to thank the auditor for his thorough job on the audit itself, and I accept the statements he has made in the audit.

The honourable member is raising the point whereby, as the result of a flaw that the auditor found, 400 drunk drivers, in essence, did not get an administrative driver's licence suspension; they actually ended up having it rescinded. The process, after we investigated it, was that there is a seven-day notice to the registrar. The police send the notice directly to the registrar, and they have seven days under the law in order to do that. For whatever reason, 0.4% of the total administrative driver's licence suspensions did not get through. We've spoken to the Solicitor General's office about it, they have spoken to the police chiefs about it, and I'm happy to inform the House that the matter has been resolved and they will be meeting the seven-day timeline.

Mr Phillips: The problem is that the auditor is a relatively limited resource and he is finding these terrible problems that you and your government created.

I'll go on to another problem he points out. He points out that in your ministry there are 30,000 what are called medical fitness problems—people who have been signalled as perhaps being unfit to be on the road, some going back four years. These are people who potentially are extremely dangerous. They may suffer a heart attack at any moment. You've got 30,000 of them under your ministry.

I go back to a fundamental responsibility. My leader pointed out that you bungled safe food for the people of Ontario and now you've bungled safe highways for the people of Ontario. How could you possibly allow 30,000 potentially medically unfit people to continue to be driving on the roads of Ontario when you could have solved this problem by investing some resources—perhaps some of that \$2.2 billion that you're going to spend on corporate tax cuts—to help make sure our roads are safe for the people of Ontario?

Hon Mr Clark: Again, I thank the honourable member for the question.

First, I'd like to state that this is a value-for-dollar audit, and I happen to accept the recommendations as

very valuable for the ministry. What we do in the ministry now is resolve the issue so that we improve the bottom line for the taxpayers of Ontario. I'd like to report to the House that as of this moment, today, over 70% of all the recommendations the auditor made to my ministry have been completed. We have met those recommendations.

With reference to the 30,000 that the honourable member has mentioned, we have already reduced that by 70%, and we will reduce the rest of the backlog by spring of 2002. We are in fact currently recruiting 19 new driver improvement counsellors, which is a 190% increase, and we are resolving the matter for the safety of the roads in Ontario.

TRAVEL DEFICIT

Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre): My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. Minister, this morning the Globe and Mail stated that according to Statistics Canada, Canada's travel deficit grew in the third quarter. This number measures the difference between what Canadians spend abroad and what visitors spend here in Canada.

Those are national statistics. What is happening here in Ontario? What does that number mean for Ontario tourism?

Hon Tim Hudak (Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation): The member is right; there was an increase in the travel deficit, indicating that Canadians are spending more abroad on tourism than we're attracting to this province.

On the positive side, we had actually seen that the travel deficit in Canada in the second quarter was the smallest it had been in almost 20 years, since 1986. We're making progress. In fact, here in Ontario we had record growth: an over 8% increase, for example, across our border. Some parts of the province saw the best tourism they had seen in a generation.

Of course, the events of September 11 have changed tourism significantly, and I have no doubt that will impact on those third quarter numbers. That's why it's important for us as a government in Ontario to work with the industry, to call together travel leaders, as we have done, to get a plan to help build those numbers back up.

There are definitely some causes for optimism. The \$10 million brought forward by Minister Flaherty in the economic statement have been very helpful, in addition to the \$4 million we brought to bear. We're seeing an impact on the positive side.

1530

Mr Spina: Minister, we know that September 11 has had an unprecedented impact on business and tourism worldwide, but I was pleased to see the reports on American Thanksgiving that suggested consumer confidence is beginning to return. In fact, just last weekend, I was through your riding as I crossed the bridge at Fort Erie with my wife to visit friends in Jamestown, New York. It was clearly obvious that Americans seem to be out doing

their Christmas shopping with great vigour and attending events like the Macy's parade and generally getting on with their lives in spite of the doom and gloom that has occurred over the past three months.

Minister, have you seen any positive signs in Ontario that the tourism sector is in fact rebounding?

Hon Mr Hudak: I appreciate the ongoing interest by the member for Brampton Centre in the tourism industry. To answer his question, yes, we definitely are seeing some causes for optimism that the tourism industry is bouncing back. In fact, the \$4 million we invested in October, in addition to the \$10 million in Minister Flaherty's economic statement, is going to go a long way.

For example, Resorts Ontario has had some success with a new winter solstice program in Ottawa. In Toronto, the mix and match program, which blends hotel stays with theatre shows and restaurants, has seen 7,800 calls and 1,400 bookings from Ontario, upstate New York and Michigan in three weeks. That's more than the entire three-month period in the previous year. On the Niagara Falls getaway packages we've seen increases in call volumes on some days upwards of 177%, about 2,500 room nights. I'm pleased to say that at our border casinos and racetracks, the numbers today are actually above where they were this time last year. It's a good start.

GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Deputy Premier and it concerns the standards of this government. Today the Provincial Auditor reported that for the first time since his appointment as auditor, when he asked for documents from the Ministry of Transportation in your government, not only was he refused the documents, but documents were actually altered. All of this is in breach of the law. Section 10 of the Audit Act of Ontario requires that documents shall be turned over to the auditor, that questions shall be answered.

What is unbelievable about this is that the person who was Minister of Transportation at the time is now a law enforcement officer in your government. He's now the Solicitor General.

Deputy Premier, what are the standards in your government? How can you allow these breaches of the law and then apparently promote the minister responsible? I'm asking for the resignation today, so that we can be sure the laws of Ontario will be observed. Will you do that?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): The Provincial Auditor has made a substantial number of recommendations. He notes in his remarks today, and I quote, "Each of the ministries involved have made commitments to take corrective action based on our findings." That, of course, is an appropriate response to the recommendations made by our Provincial Auditor after his review.

With respect to the specific item you mentioned in the Ministry of Transportation, we've already heard from the

minister this afternoon in question period about the actions the current minister took in order to correct the concern that had been raised by the auditor. After meeting with the auditor in June, the minister directed staff to develop a code of conduct to be followed when dealing with OPA staff, and this has been done. The code requires staff to fully co-operate with the Office of the Provincial Auditor to disclose requested information and permit confidential interviews of staff, if requested.

Mr Hampton: This is about the standards of your government. This is the Provincial Auditor saying, "For the first time since being appointed Provincial Auditor, I have to report...." This doesn't sound like a very happy occasion for the auditor, that when he asked for documents pursuant to an audit, he was first denied documents and then his staff was given documents that had been altered.

How are the people of Ontario to trust your government when you don't follow the law, when you alter documents and delete documents in breach of the law, and the minister who was responsible has now seemingly been promoted into a law enforcement position and the deputy minister who was responsible is now Deputy Minister of the Environment, an even more critical appointment?

The question is, what are the standards for your government? Are people who are supposed to be accountable in your government allowed to break the law, allowed to alter government documents, allowed to delete government documents, allowed to frustrate the work of the Provincial Auditor? Are those the standards of your government?

Hon Mr Flaherty: One of the important roles of the Provincial Auditor is to point out where improvements ought to be made. Indeed he did that in the case of the Ministry of Transportation. The minister has already indicated this afternoon that he has created a code of conduct within that ministry. I'm pleased to learn—I understand Management Board intends to implement this code of conduct province-wide, which should assist substantially in the relationships between the ministries and the Office of the Provincial Auditor.

HEARINGS ON ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES LEGISLATION

Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings): My question is for the Minister of Citizenship. I feel sorry for the spot that you're in, having to force this bill through. Very clearly it is being done for election purposes so that you can appear to have kept your commitment.

I'm going to suggest to you that you look for support within your own caucus to stop this bill. You need to say to the Minister of Labour, "This bill will not get one more person a job." You need to say to the Minister of Housing, "You've got to help me. This bill won't make one accessible housing unit." You need to talk to the Minister of Health and say, "This bill will not help one person with a disability get medical services." You need

to say to the minister of travel, who is so pleased about the numbers, that this bill still will not allow visitors to our province to have access to hotel rooms; for tourists in theatres, nothing.

Minister, you don't want to listen to us. That's very clear with the time allocation on the bill. You need to listen to the disabled community. This bill is being rammed through. Will you extend the public hearings so that 1.6 million Ontarians have a legitimate mechanism to speak to you and share their challenges?

Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors): On the theme of "Will you...?" will you tell the people of Ontario what the Liberal Party and what a Liberal government would do for disabled persons in this province? We've heard the yapping and the harping—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Order. The member for Windsor West and the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale, please come to order.

Hon Mr Jackson: I would hope the member from Windsor goes to the public hearings in Windsor. I understand that there is a full day of discussion and input from the disabilities community in Windsor, her own backyard.

They have yet to hear where Dalton McGuinty stands on the disabled. We know—it is a public record—that the Liberals failed to make one commitment to the disabilities community in the last election. In the previous election to that, they failed to make one commitment to the disabled community in this province. It's time you came clean and told Ontarians with disabilities where you stand.

1540

Mr Parsons: If you want Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals to do your job, that's fine. We have in the past and we will continue to do it. We have put on record that we will, first of all, hold full public consultations, which you have not, and we will adhere to the 11 recommendations which were supported by your party and not followed.

Minister, there is more to Ontario than Ottawa, Windsor, Toronto, Thunder Bay and Sudbury. For a person requiring mobility transportation to get to the hearings, it is virtually impossible in the time frame that you have created. For people needing assistance in putting together a brief, for people needing to get there and look you in the eye, that is not possible with these rammed-through meetings.

If you genuinely want to talk to people whose very quality of life rests in your hands, you need to extend the hearings and give them a real, genuine opportunity to meet and give you suggestions on what should be done. We've done it, you've seen it and you need to listen to them. Will you extend your hearings?

Hon Mr Jackson: There has been a tremendous amount of consultation. Not only has our government done extensive consultations throughout the province; his own caucus, the Liberal party, conducted hearings. We

have reams of paper, tonnes of information, we've listened out there.

What this government has done is make a commitment to bring in the first and most comprehensive disabilities legislation anywhere in Canada. That's where we stand. What we're still waiting to hear from you is, when will you stop talking process and start talking about people? When are you going to stop promising the earth, the moon and the stars and settle down and start committing to the disabled community in this province exactly what a Liberal government would provide? Do you know what? They haven't heard a single commitment from the Ontario Liberal Party, not a single commitment. It's about time you came clean with the citizens of Ontario and told them what you would do.

PREMIER'S RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean): I have a question about eastern Ontario, and it's for the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology. It's with regard to the Premier's Research Excellence Awards, which were introduced in the budget of 1998 and enhanced in the budget of 2000.

In 1999, I had the pleasure of presenting nine of these awards to brilliant, worthy recipients. One such award went to Dr Susannah Scott at the University of Ottawa. On that day I had occasion to introduce Dr Scott to my chief of staff, and I'm proud to tell you that she's now his wife and expecting their second child. I mention that just to show my contribution to the reversal of the brain drain—very significant that the American universities are not above.

The 2001 awards were made in Ottawa last Tuesday, and I would ask the Minister if he might comment on the excellence of the work done by the recipients of those awards.

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): I thank the honourable member for the honour of being in eastern Ontario last Tuesday and presenting 27 of Ontario's brightest young researchers and scientists with Premier's Research Excellence awards.

Each award recipient receives \$150,000, \$100,000 of that from the government of Ontario and \$50,000 from the respective university's health science centre or research institute, and in many cases they're helped along by the private sector. These are some of the largest scientific awards of their kind in Canada. We've seen some tremendous research being carried out in the area of obesity, something I'll probably benefit from myself some day; mental health; and river flows, so you can properly place hydroelectric dams in an environmentally friendly way. A whole range of disciplines is represented in the 27 brilliant young people who received those awards.

Mr Guzzo: I'd like the Minister to zero in on the recipients from eastern Ontario. No one has to tell the

members of this House that the pastures are much greener in eastern Ontario than elsewhere. One only needs to look at the quality of the members from eastern Ontario on both sides of the House. Indeed, in my party, 80% of the members are cabinet material. Unfortunately, the other 20% bring down the average.

Of the 27 people honoured last week—and we're proud of all 27 of them—I'm most heartened by the work of two, particularly Dr Robin Parks, in genetic diseases at the University of Ottawa, and Dr Chris Moyes of Queen's University, who works in the area of mechanisms to detect changes in energy demand—and on Thursdays around here, we know about changes in energy demand. Mr Minister, I wonder if you might zero in on the work of those two individuals.

Hon Mr Wilson: Clearly the individuals the honourable member has mentioned are world leaders in their particular areas of research. Dr Robin Parks, for example, of the University of Ottawa, is investigating new ways of using harmless forms of viruses to deliver therapeutic genes into people suffering from genetic diseases. Dr Parks's research may help scientists find cures for debilitating diseases such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy and cystic fibrosis. Dr Christopher Moyes of Queen's University studies the mechanisms by which plant cells detect changes in energy demand and mount adaptive responses. Dr Moyes's research may lead to better treatment for human cardiovascular and neuromuscular diseases.

All of the 27 researchers have been recognized by their peers to be world leaders. They will help reverse the brain drain and make sure there are high-tech jobs for the people of eastern Ontario. All these researchers are potential Nobel Prize laureates of the future.

MUNICIPAL WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (Vaughan-King-Aurora): In the absence of the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and several others, my question is for the Deputy Premier.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): The member will know that when you start that, you're going to have the other side yelling.

Mr Sorbara: I tell the Deputy Premier that a couple of nights ago, representatives from the city of Toronto met with the community of Maple to begin to discuss the specific details for the closing of the Keele Valley landfill site. The community was very encouraged with the progress the city of Toronto is making toward that closure.

A couple of days ago, or perhaps it was yesterday, the Minister of Municipal Affairs undertook, by way of an announcement, that the government would solve the city of Toronto's waste disposal problems by way of the empowerment of a smart council, as he refers to it in the press release. I'm not sure if the Minister of the Envi-

ronment knows anything about this, but I'm sure the Deputy Premier does.

I ask the Deputy Premier this: will he undertake right now in this House to make absolutely clear and certain that no matter what the Minister of Municipal Affairs undertakes, under no circumstances will the Premier or the Minister of Municipal Affairs or the Minister of the Environment or indeed the Minister of Finance go back on their ironclad commitment to ensure that Keele Valley is closed at the end of December 2002, in accordance with their word and their law?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): Our government keeps its commitments.

Mr Sorbara: I'm delighted to hear that and I will take that as an absolute affirmative. I say to the Deputy Premier that the announcement by the Minister of Municipal Affairs certainly will have taken the Minister of the Environment by surprise. Will the Deputy Premier undertake to present to this House and to the public the terms of reference the government is going to apply to its determination to undertake the identification of solutions for waste disposal, not only for the city of Toronto but for the greater Toronto area?

This is a serious issue. The city, in about a week, is prepared to renew a contract with the state of Michigan for a five-year contract for waste disposal. What exactly are the terms of reference the government is intending to apply to the smart council that now will be seized with the problem of waste disposal in the greater Toronto area?

Hon Mr Flaherty: I thank the member opposite from—sorry, he's not here very often. The member from Vaughan-King-Aurora, Mr Sorbara, is here this afternoon and I thank him for the question.

A number of municipal leaders, of course, have raised concerns about the transferring of garbage from the city of Toronto to Michigan, particularly given the heavy truck traffic that will create on Highway 401 westbound through Mississauga, and then on through Halton and through southwestern Ontario to Michigan. That concern has been expressed by Mayor McCallion of Mississauga and Mayor DeCicco of London as well on behalf of the people who live in their communities. It is the city of Toronto that is proposing this way of disposing of waste and it is for the city of Toronto to justify its proposed waste management concepts and ideas. I think all of us would think that this is a matter of some concern, not only to the city of Toronto but to the citizens of Ontario, certainly the citizens of Mississauga and all of those living on the route down 401 that this volume of traffic would be—

The Speaker: Order. I'm afraid the minister's time is up.

1550

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services. In the last

couple of days I've read a couple of articles about the way the federal Liberals are spending money, and I must say that it was totally amazing to find out that in one article the federal Liberal government and Correctional Services Canada is spending \$16,000 on a survey of inmates to ask them what they thought of a proposal to introduce new uniforms for correctional officers.

Interjections.

Mrs Molinari: Yes, I agree that it's quite a way to spend money.

Minister, what would your response be as Minister of Correctional Services in the province of Ontario? Can you assure the taxpayers of Ontario and my taxpayers of Thornhill that in Ontario this sort of thing does not happen?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): Before I go ahead, I want to say to the members opposite that I do appreciate the support of the member from Sudbury for his resolutions and his support over the last couple of days and actually over the last week on the issue around Clinton Suzack. I do want to thank the member for his continued effort. I know it's an issue at his own riding. It's certainly an issue we have been standing for in this province as it relates to dealing with individuals who are in both provincial and federal institutions.

To the member's question, I would say many jurisdictions around the globe are trying to reform corrections. We are not any different from that because we have indeed been trying to reform the operations of corrections in this province. Of course, there is a contrast to how those have been doing it, and you have indeed identified one of the contrasts. Theirs is to spend money on that type of analysis; ours is to focus on results.

Mrs Molinari: Thank you for the response, Minister. It's reassuring to know that, unlike the federal Liberal government, our government, the Mike Harris government, puts the needs of victims before those of criminals and has also shown accountability for their actions by investing taxpayers' dollars to make our communities in Ontario safer to work and live in.

The second article talks about a series of photographs of intoxicated prisoners taken by guards in a federal jail in Vancouver. In the article, a spokesperson from Correctional Service Canada confirms that these pictures were discovered recently pasted into a hardbound journal and kept at the jail. Apparently, these pictures depict prisoners who are drunk or high on drugs.

Minister, can you tell me whether you think this is appropriate and what our government is doing—

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Just before the minister answers, I'm going to go on record. I let that question go. You're not going to be able to get around again by asking questions like that about the federal government, going through and asking it like that. I allowed a little leeway because I tend to give some leeway on first questions, but you can't stand up and ask federal issue

questions and then say, "What do you feel about it?" That's a total waste of time and I won't allow it again.

I say to the members or anybody who's putting those questions together, it needs to be within the minister's purview. I gave you a lot of latitude. I would ask all members that they ask questions to the minister, and don't try to couch it in that way and try to get around the rules of this House.

Minister of Correctional Services.

Hon Mr Sampson: Thank you, Speaker, for that clarification. The members opposite were trying to goad me to say that there is not a drug problem in provincial jails. There is a drug problem in provincial jails and there has been for some time. Under the jurisdictions—

Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West): The minister must be bored. The auditor's report—

Hon Mr Sampson: I say to the member from Windsor, under the jurisdictions of both Liberal and NDP governments there has been a problem with drug usage in provincial institutions.

The Speaker: Order. We have less than a minute. It's the end of the week. Can we just answer the question, please?

Hon Mr Sampson: I say to the member from Windsor, we're prepared to address it. We're prepared to say that's the fact, unfortunately, and we're prepared to address it. How do we do that? We're going to do it very simply by starting off with testing those individuals who are in our institutions to see whether they are on drugs and to provide stiff penalties within the institutions for those who continue to abuse drugs when they shouldn't. I say to the member opposite, at least we're doing something about it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): Pursuant to standing order 55, I have a statement of business of the House for the week of December 3.

On Monday afternoon we will continue debate on Bill 122.

On Monday evening we will continue debate on Bill 130.

On Tuesday afternoon we will continue debate on Bill 127.

Tuesday evening's business is still to be determined.

On Wednesday afternoon we will continue debate on Bill 130.

Wednesday evening's business is still to be determined.

Thursday morning, during private members' business, we will discuss ballot item number 37, standing in the name of Mr Colle, and ballot item number 38, standing in the name of Mr McMeekin.

Thursday afternoon's business is still to be determined.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): This is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas many residents of St Catharines and other communities in Ontario are unable to find a family doctor as a result of the growing doctor shortage we have experienced during the tenure of the Harris government;

“Whereas cancer patients in Ontario requiring radiation treatment face unacceptable delays and are often forced to travel to the United States to receive medical attention;

“Whereas many prescription drugs which would help patients with a variety of medical conditions such as macular degeneration, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, diabetes and heart failure are not covered by OHIP;

“Whereas many assistive devices that could aid patients in Ontario are not eligible for funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health;

“Whereas community care access centres have inadequate funding to carry out their responsibilities for long-term and home care;

“Whereas the Harris government has now spent over \$240 million on blatantly partisan government advertising in the form of glossy brochures and other items, such as television and radio ads;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the Conservative government of Mike Harris to immediately end their abuse of public office and terminate any further expenditure on political advertising and to invest this money into health care in the province of Ontario.”

I affix my signature, as I know you would want to, Madam Speaker. I agree with this petition and that it makes reference to this particular blurb.

CHILD CARE

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly and it reads as follows:

“Whereas an internal government document states the Conservative government is considering cutting the regulated child care budget by at least 40%;

“Whereas the same internal document states the government is also considering completely cutting all funding for regulated child care and family resource programs in Ontario;

“Whereas the Conservative government has already cut funding for regulated child care by 15% between 1995 and 1998 and downloaded 20% of the child care and family resource program budget on to municipalities;

“Whereas Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain identified regulated child care and family resource programs as integral to early childhood development;

“Whereas the Conservative government will receive \$844 million from the federal government over five years for early childhood development;

“Whereas Ontario is the only province which didn’t spend a cent of this year’s federal money on regulated child care;

“Whereas other provinces are implementing innovative, affordable, and accessible child care programs such as Quebec’s \$5-a-day child care program; and

“Whereas the need for affordable, accessible, regulated child care and family resources continues to grow in Ontario,

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We demand the Conservative government protect the current regulated child care and family resource program budgets and invest significant federal Early Years funding in regulated child care and family resource programs. We demand future federal Early Years funding be invested in an expansion of affordable, regulated child care and in continued funding for family resource programs.”

This comes from my friends at York University Co-operative Daycare Centre. I agree with the petitioners. I have signed my name to it.

1600

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CORPORATIONS ACT, 2001

LOI DE 2001 SUR LES SOCIÉTÉS D’ACCÈS AUX SOINS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 28, 2001, on the motion for second reading of Bill 130, An Act respecting community care access corporations / Projet de loi 130, Loi concernant les sociétés d'accès aux soins communautaires.

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): I’d like to start off this debate and pick up where I left off last evening. Where I left off last evening was having relayed to the members of the House the service reductions that had been raised very publicly by the Manitoulin-Sudbury Community Care Access Centre in a press conference that was held on May 23. There, the chair of the board, Bob Fera, made it very clear that in order to reduce the deficit by \$1.8 million, the CCAC would have to take a number of dramatic actions with respect to cutting services to people in our community.

I want to go through the implications that were also announced by the chair of the board at that time. They were as follows:

Once discharged from the CCAC homemaking service, many people, unable to do their own homemaking, will have to buy from other agencies the services they used to receive from the community care access centre at a very direct charge to them.

Second, some people who cannot afford to pay and who are without family or friends able to help them will have to go without homemaking services. Their living conditions will deteriorate over time, causing some to have to move into long-term-care facilities.

Third, after discharge from the CCAC, many people will have to pay for professional health services from the private sector or may have to travel to obtain service from the public system, from, for example, hospital outpatient departments. They will have to wait a long time to obtain such services.

Fourth, with the community care access centre no longer providing them with certain medical supplies at no charge, many people will have to buy these supplies from other agencies.

Fifth, more people will incur medical equipment rental costs.

Finally, some people may go without health services, supplies and equipment because they cannot afford to pay the additional costs, including travel costs, and their health will be affected.

It's interesting to note that the chair of the board was also very direct with the members of the media who were there that day in terms of saying whose fault it was that this particular community care access centre had to implement the dramatic cuts that they had to at that time. I want to quote from some of the comments that Mr Fera, chair of the board, made at the time. I am assuming there are some minister's staff here who are writing down some of these names, because these are the people who are going to be purged through Bill 130—so that's Bob Fera, chair of the Manitoulin-Sudbury Community Care Access Centre. He said that this community care access centre was left with a projected deficit of \$1.8 million because of the decision by this government to freeze budgets.

In this case, it's a cut to the budget, because this is one of the community care access centres that got some money at last year's fiscal year-end to deal with a deficit. So they have now received a cut in their funding. Their deficit was one of the lowest among Ontario's 43 CCACs. Over \$1.6 million of the \$1.8-million deficit is attributed directly to higher prices for client services that the Manitoulin-Sudbury CCAC purchases from other agencies, over which we have absolutely no control.

I raise that point because last June the government, particularly Minister Clement, was very quick to point the finger at CCACs and say there were deficits in CCACs because of the incompetence either of the executive director or the boards of directors. He was very quick to point his finger and lay the blame with individual CCACs.

Clearly, this CCAC has a deficit, \$1.6 million out of \$1.8 million, which is directly attributed to rising costs from the agencies it purchased services from and over which it has no control in terms of those higher costs. It has nothing to do with them being incompetent in terms of spending, nothing at all. For the record, this CCAC did receive a 2% increase in its budget, like all others did last

year, but over the past three years, while 43 CCACs have received a total funding increase of about \$272 million, our CCAC has received \$487,000 of that, less than one fifth of 1%. So again, it would be very false or incorrect of the government to argue that this CCAC has improperly spent its budget. It got less than one fifth of 1% of the increase that went to all CCACs. Clearly, volume and need are far outstripping the budget of the Manitoulin-Sudbury CCAC.

Now, because they have been told by their legal advisers that the government's Bill 46 required that agencies could not run a deficit and that directors would be personally liable if a deficit was run, the board of this CCAC made a decision that they would have to cut services to cut the deficit. The chair said the following: "Although we deeply regret having to implement these service changes, our deficit reduction plan, I repeat loudly and clearly, is necessary due to the government's imminent policy concerning deficits and their continued inadequate funding for home care. In the face of such policies, our agency has no choice but to implement service reductions which we know will have a profound impact on our clients and the communities we serve. For these service reductions, our board deeply apologizes."

"We are a volunteer board elected to serve the home care needs of our communities. We will not quietly see them being eroded or eliminated by a government who puts fiscal impossibilities before serving the legitimate health care needs of the community, which they paid for through their taxes over the years and now in their time of need will be denied because of changes in government policy. It is just not right. Indeed, in my opinion, it is immoral."

The chair was very clear, very public in his criticism. I suspect his name is one of the names on the list the government has of board members who will be replaced very quickly once Bill 130 is passed.

Any number of other CCACs also have had to cut services to deal with the government's cut to home care this year. In Peterborough, for example, \$2.6 million must be reduced from client services. The reduction plan there calls for a 13.5% reduction in nursing services. The reduction in personal support services will be in the order of 23.8%. Therapy services will be reduced by up to 50% of their previous levels.

In Simcoe county, here are the impacts with respect to the fact that the government is not funding the deficits for CCACs. Children's growth and development clinics, children's screening clinics and the acquired brain injury program are being discontinued. Patients who are otherwise well and mobile within the community, with or without assistance, will not receive services. These patients will have to return to hospitals, emergency departments, an outpatient clinic, after-hours clinic or a doctor's office, which of course costs the health care system more in the long run. Housekeeping services are not being provided.

Here are the impacts at the Near North Community Care Access Centre: There will be no personal

support/home support services provided to new clients until the capped volume target is reached. Preventive visits/monitoring of vital signs and provision of vitamin B12 injections will be discontinued. All patients who are ambulatory or able to access outpatient ACU physicians' offices and their private services will be redirected to those sources of services, again costing health care more than it would to provide home care and nursing services to these clients.

In Ottawa-Carleton, here are the impacts: The CCAC will now only be able to admit 22 clients per month for personal support/homemaking services. On average, the CCAC receives over 100 requests per month for these services. Visiting nursing will see a 40% reduction in new admissions per month and shift nursing will be reduced by 23%. Clients must return to emergency, clinics or family physicians for treatment, again an increased cost to the health care system.

I've also got the impacts for Halton and Hastings and Prince Edward counties, again, huge cuts: homemaking services, nursing services, physiotherapy services. The CCAC is having to tell people to go to their family doctor, to the emergency ward or somewhere else for services they need, which will cost the system more in the long run.

It was because of these cuts that many CCAC boards of directors in particular came forward and in a very public way condemned this government for its current underfunding of home care. It is directly as a result of the public criticism made by many community care access centres across this province that the government is moving in the direction it is today, which is to use Bill 130 as a mechanism to gain control over CCACs, to muzzle the criticism and to guarantee that whatever goes out to the public is what the minister authorizes to go out as information.

That's what this bill is all about. It goes directly back to the courage of many CCAC boards of directors who went public and said, "We have to make these cuts, but these cuts are the direct result of the current underfunding of community care by this government."

1610

Last night in this House, the minister referred to this report by PricewaterhouseCoopers and said essentially, "If you oppose this bill, then you don't want to see the important recommendations in this report implemented." You know what? Nothing could be further from the truth, because there are some very important recommendations in this report that was finally released this June. In fact, there are many important recommendations that call on this government to finally do a number of things it should have been doing if it wanted to really support home care in Ontario. It's probably worthwhile just mentioning a few of the things that PricewaterhouseCoopers says this government should do as part of this report.

Recommendation 2: "The Ministry" of Health "needs to revisit and clarify the scope of mandatory functions to be provided by CCACs in order to ensure that all residents of the province have equitable access to the same range of core services and programs."

Page 146, recommendation 5: "The ministry should ... implement a planning process to forecast future home care service volumes" in Ontario.

Page 148, recommendation 9: "The ministry," in conjunction with the community care access association "and CCACs need to identify and implement strategies to build on best practices and improve province-wide consistency for key components of the contract management process."

Page 152, recommendations 12, 13 and 14:

"12. The ministry should make provisions for the Long-Term Care Act to recognize CCACs.

"13. The ministry needs to take immediate action to complete discussions with CCACs on the legal text of the service agreement and ensure that all CCAC service agreements are signed.

"14: The ministry needs to provide improved direction to CCACs with respect to their accountability requirements."

I support the implementation of the recommendations in this report, because many of them finally say very clearly that the ministry has an obligation itself to do a number of things to ensure that the direction of home care is clear, to ensure that there are good best practices in place, that training is in place etc.

But where I differ with the minister is that nothing that was said in this report by PricewaterhouseCoopers would lead to the government having to take some of the actions they are taking in order to get it implemented. In fact, the consultants did not say the minister now will have to appoint the boards of directors to get the recommendations in this report implemented. PricewaterhouseCoopers did not say that to get this document implemented, the minister should appoint all the executive directors of community care access centres. In order to incorporate or implement the recommendations in this report, the consultants also did not say the minister would have to have direct control over all information that is now distributed by CCACs to the public.

So there's nothing in this report that cannot be implemented without the government taking the actions it is to assume direct control over CCACs. I repeat, the only reason the government is taking that action, which is a hostile takeover of CCACs, is because they want to muzzle, minimize, silence as best as possible the criticism that has come from many CCACs as a result of this government's underfunding of home care.

What's also interesting is that while last night the minister talked about this report and suggested that if you didn't support Bill 130, you didn't support the recommendations, a notion I've just tried to dispel, it's interesting that the minister has never once focused on the recommendations in this report that clearly show that the government has to invest in home care if these recommendations are going to be implemented properly.

I haven't heard the minister once say that the independent consultants who did this work for this ministry also very clearly said there would have to be a continued, increased investment in home care to ensure

that home care could work in this province. I think it's worthwhile for me to take just a moment to point out those very important recommendations.

Recommendation 4 of the PricewaterhouseCoopers report says the following: "The ministry should continue to move forward with its commitment to invest in CCACs as indicated in the ministry's 2000-01 business plan and ensure consistent funding approaches across the province."

If you go back to the minister's business plan with respect to what was said, it says very clearly, and I'm quoting: "This is consistent with the ministry's business plan for 2000-01 which states, 'To provide better care for patients and improve access to services, we will expand and enhance our community-based health care, home care and psychiatric services.'" Indeed, the business plan from the ministry was very clear. We will expand, enhance—that means increase—the budget in order for that to happen. It didn't say freeze the budget, as this government did. It didn't say cut the budgets, because that's what happened this year in May. No, the consultant's report was very clear that the ministry needed to follow the business plan which said there would be an increase in home care in order to ensure that there would be adequate levels of funding for CCACs across the province.

That wasn't the only recommendation with respect to increased funding. If you look at recommendation 6, PricewaterhouseCoopers says the following: "The ministry, CCACs, service providers, provincial associations and educational institutions should work collaboratively to ensure that a planning process is implemented to make sure that the work force is in place to deliver the volume and type of home care services required in the future." The report showed clearly that the shortages of human resources in home care agencies is a barrier to responding to client needs. They also made it very clear that in order to deal with this human resources problem—because many people in home care are going to the nursing sector because they can make more money—the government was going to have to invest more in staffing in home care to keep those health care providers in place serving clients' needs. That requires an investment—not a freeze, not a cut—by this government to ensure that would happen.

Recommendation 20: "The ministry should provide timely approval of CCAC service plans and expansion/enhancement budgets."

So in any number of places in this report, which the minister failed to mention last night, conveniently so, the people who did this report, PricewaterhouseCoopers, made it absolutely clear that if you were going to implement these recommendations, you also had to increase enhanced funding for home care and we haven't heard the government talk about that. Indeed, we've heard the government try to say it isn't about money. Yes, it is about money and that's not just me, Shelley Martel, NDP critic saying that. That's what your own consultants said in a report that was released this June.

I think it's important that the consultants also said the following, because there has been a tendency of some members, and certainly Minister Clement, to go at some of the boards of directors, go at some of the staff that have been providing service, as he did in June: "Given that a strong home care sector is critical to the future sustainability of the health care system, it is recommended that strategies be implemented to strengthen the role of CCACs and position them to meet future growing demands."

They also said, among most of the people whom they talked to, there was wide acceptance, wide approval, of the services that were being delivered and it was critical that we continue to support CCACs in their ongoing role to do that—not take them over, not silence them; support them in their ongoing role to deliver services to the clients who they are supposed to represent in their community.

What has been the government's response with respect to this report and to the criticism that came from many CCACs with respect to the cuts? Well, we have a bill before us that at the end of the day does one thing: it has the government take over control of CCACs so that the government can control who's on the boards, who the executive directors are and what information is released to the public.

I'm just going to go through a couple of the sections where this becomes very clear. Under the bill, for example, community care access corporations will be exempt from the Corporations Act. It's important to just have a quick look at what happens now, because CCACs are under the Corporations Act. As a result of being under the Corporations Act, they have to do a number of things. They have corporate memberships: people can apply, they buy a membership. They have to have an annual general meeting. At the annual general meeting they have to duly elect a board from the people who are there voting. That board, as well, then has an obligation to vote for a chair and a vice-chair. People who come to that annual general meeting have a chance to vote on bylaws which are being passed by the community care access centre, and they receive a number of other things; in the case of our CCAC, a look at what next year's planning is, what the objectives are of the corporation. People have a chance to vote on all of these things.

1620

It's interesting. One of the changes the government is making is to exempt the new community care access corporations from the Corporations Act. There's no further obligation to have a membership. Indeed, the board of these new corporations will be the membership. There's no obligation to hold a membership meeting, an annual general meeting; there's nothing in the legislation that provides for that either. There is no more obligation that people who are on the board are duly elected by the community they are supposed to represent. It's clear in the bill that that will be done by the Lieutenant Governor, by the government.

So many of the provisions that are in place now for a board to be democratically elected at the local level and

for people who are interested in this matter to become members and have their say about how that organization is going to be run are completely wiped out under this bill. In fact, under this bill the board is the corporation. The six or seven people whom the Lieutenant Governor appoints run the whole show. There's no obligation to hold even one annual general meeting. There's no obligation with respect to, particularly in this bill, the community group that's going to be established. There's no obligation; there's nothing in the legislation that talks about that relationship or that there will be meetings between that group, and those meetings will be public—nothing like that. So it's very clear that the people the government selects to be the directors will run the whole show with no input coming from the public, not only on an annual basis, but on an ongoing basis.

Secondly, under subsection 7(1), it's very clear that the board of directors will be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Again, I'm completely opposed to that, but there is also nothing in this legislation that at least says that those people will somehow be representative of the community they are designed to represent. Under the Ministry of Health Act, at least under that particular bill, the membership of the DHC has to reflect the diversity of the population in that geographic area in terms of gender, in terms of age, disability, place of residence, cultural, linguistic, ethnic, spiritual factors etc. Nothing like this exists in Bill 130. We have no idea who is going to be appointed; we only know that the government is going to make the appointments. There's no guarantee that the people who are appointed will represent either the ethnic, linguistic or cultural background, the age, gender of the community for the CCAC that they're going to direct—nothing like that exists. I heard the minister say last night, "Oh, yes, that will happen." The fact of the matter is, there's nothing like that in the legislation to guarantee any of that.

If you look at subsections 10(1), 10(2) and 10(4), the government now has the ability to appoint a person to be the executive director. It's the government that will set the salary and any other remuneration benefits, including rights to severance, termination, retirement and superannuation. It's the government as well that will determine when that appointment and indeed when that employment will end.

This is really unprecedented in the health care sector, where the government now steps in and appoints not only the board but the executive director. The executive director is the person who is going to be running the day-to-day operations of the CCAC. So now the government, in essence, through that agent, will be running the day-to-day operations of the CCAC.

I am opposed to that because that executive director then becomes beholden to the government, not to the local board, not to the local community. If his or her employment is dependent upon what he does or she does for their political masters, that's what they're going to do: what their political masters tell them to do. That might not necessarily be what's best for the community;

that might not necessarily be best for home care and for the clients we're supposed to be delivering care to. It is very intrusive, and frankly, as I said earlier, it's unprecedented in terms of the government reaching its long arm into CCACs and taking over an employment position which currently is a function of those boards. Again, that person, because their employment depends on it, is going to be beholden to the government and whatever the government says. I don't think in many cases that may be the best thing for the local community or the delivery of home care in those communities.

This bill as well, under section 11, says under "Minister's directions" that the minister can issue directions on matters relating to the exercise of these corporations, that each community care access corporation has to comply with the directions, and most importantly, that the Regulations Act does not apply with respect to the directions.

If you go to the Regulations Act, it says the following: "A regulation means a regulation, rule, order or bylaw of a legislative nature made or approved under an act of the Legislature by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, a minister of the crown, an official of the government or a board or commission, all the members of which are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor."

Clearly this refers to a minister in this circumstance. I think clearly "rule" or "order" could also apply to "directions," and under the current Regulations Act, all of those regulations—"directions"—have to be published in the Ontario Gazette, so they become public. What the government has done by exempting these corporations and the directions of the minister from the Regulations Act is to ensure that whatever the government directs CCACs to do as policy issues now will not become public matters.

It's very clear that the government is doing whatever it can to ensure that information doesn't get out to the public with respect to what is happening in community care access centres. Subsection 15(1) includes a list of things the corporation can't do before it's designated without the minister's approval. One of those things includes determining who will get a management position in community care access centres. Now you have the government appointing the board, you have the government appointing the executive director and, under this section, the ability of the government as well to approve people who are being appointed to managerial positions, like case managers.

Queen's Park doesn't have the best idea about who would make the best case manager in the Manitoulin-Sudbury CCAC. It's wrong for the government, through legislation, to try and impose that type of control on what should be a community-based, community-run health care organization.

In subsection 16(4), for example, the minister may require a corporation "to give the minister information, documents or records that are in the custody or control of the corporation." The minister spoke to this last night and said it's not her intention. In fact, under the Long-Term Care Act, confidential documents about patients or about

employees can't be released. I point out to the minister today that there is nothing in Bill 130 that says the provisions of the Long-Term Care Act, which she referenced last night, supersede anything in Bill 130. If it is her intention that the Long-Term Care Act should prevail, then this act should say that. It doesn't.

Finally, with respect to section 18—this refers to information for the public—the minister will make an annual report of the corporation available to the public—and this is the important point—“and may make available such other information about each corporation as he or she considers to be necessary in the public interest.”

You know, I suspect that it's not going to be, in the minister's opinion, in the public interest to disclose the deficits of individual CCACs. I suspect that the minister is going to decide that it's not going to be in the public interest, for example, to find out what service cuts will come if CCACs have a deficit and in order to deal with that deficit they have to cut services. I suspect it's not going to be in the public interest for the minister to disclose publicly through the CCAC what the waiting list might be for home care, for homemaking or for physiotherapy, or if there's a waiting period when you're discharged from hospital to get services.

What's going to happen under this provision is, outside of the annual report, which in most CCACs is already made public—it is in mine; I suspect it is in the majority of CCACs. With the exception of that annual report, the minister will do whatever is necessary to ensure that important information, which should be accessible to the public, will no longer be accessible to the public. Because that's been part of the problem for the government, hasn't it? When it became clear that CCACs were going to have deficits because this government was underfunding CCACs this year, it became clear that many of them would have to make service cuts. Many of them were very public and very vocal about those service cuts and directing their criticism for the same back to the government.

If the minister has control over what's distributed, it's not going to be very hard any more to silence some of that criticism, is it? When the government, through the minister, can say, “You're not going to give the MPPs information about service reductions or waiting lists or deficits or how many people are waiting for service; and you're not going to release that to the media; and you're not going to release that to the public, no matter who asks for it, because it's not in the public interest,” it's going to be very easy for the government to really put a lid on the criticism that this government has been facing over the last number of months because of its cuts. Again, I say that's really what the bill is all about in the first place. The bill is all about the government's taking over control of CCACs by appointing the boards, by appointing the executive directors, by even going so far as to have to approve people in management positions within the organization and by determining what information can be released publicly. If you can do all those things, you sure can limit any negative criticism coming out of some of

those organizations. Frankly, that's really what the bill is all about.

1630

It's important to deal with some of the responses to the bill. It's not just opposition members who are being critical of the bill in this way, and it's not just opposition members who have pointed out that what this represents is really a hostile takeover of many of these organizations. Let me go through some of the comments that have been made by people who have had a chance to look at this. It is interesting.

This is an article from November 19, 2001. The president of the community care access centre in Toronto says the following: “‘We think it's rather draconian. We were totally unprepared for this,’ said Doug Hamilton, president of the Toronto Community Care Access Centre at a news conference on Friday. ‘It silences the voice of the community.’” Of course it does. That's exactly what it was intended to do.

The board of directors of the community care access centre in Waterloo sent this media advisory out on November 9. I'm going to quote the chair, Norma Marossi, who said, “I am truly offended by the message that the proposed legislation sends. Five years ago CCAC boards were appointed by the current government's Minister of Health with a mandate to improve health services in the community. Blood, sweat and tears went into that task, and up until now, our board has received nothing but praise from the province for the job done.” I remind you, Speaker—I mentioned this last night—that this is also a community care access centre that just this year received a national award with respect to its management at the community care access centre in Kitchener, a national award. “It is now glaringly obvious that advocacy on behalf of the frail, sick and vulnerable in the community will not be tolerated. Provincial appointees with the support of government will be able to ignore the pleas from the community for the service they deserve.”

I'm going to spell that name, because there's probably staff here making the purge list of all those people who are going to be the first to go when this bill is passed: Norma M-a-r-o-s-s-i, the chair of the community care access centre in the Waterloo region.

Here are some more folks from Waterloo. The board director, David Brohman, said, “The minister needs to read the transcript from the June 12 community forum and understand that this is not about partisan politics. It is about providing support to people in their homes so they don't have to go to hospital.” I remind you that this board was very proactive. It held a community meeting on June 12. About 250 people attended, and that's where they outlined what impacts the cuts would have in that area. They were quite vocal about who was responsible, and they made it clear it was this government.

The vice-chair, John Enns, said, “The implications of the proposed legislation is a slap in the face the week after the Waterloo CCAC was praised for its accountability and effectiveness in a glowing report from the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation. This

is our second round of receiving council's highest level of accreditation."

Speaker, you'll recall that in this House, Minister Clement made it a point to point fingers at the CCACs, made it a point to bash them and say that the problem we had with respect to delivery of service was because of mismanagement of the budgets of CCACs. Here's a CCAC that just won a national award for its management and accountability.

Instead of pointing fingers at everyone else, the minister should perhaps take a look in the mirror and see who's really responsible for the problem we have now. The problem has to do with this government not adequately funding home care while this same government has \$2.3 billion for a tax cut for its corporate friends.

I want to quote a little bit more from the chair, Norma Marossi, who said the following about the bill: "The news was a shock, because up until now, the province has been complimentary of the service that we have provided. Many of us were appointed by the Minister of Health in 1996. For the past five years, we have worked to support and develop a better community home care and placement system that represents the needs of the sick, frail and vulnerable. And yes, along with managing the budget of this organization, we have advocated for more help for our clients. Advocacy for the many that cannot speak for themselves is a significant part of the mission of this organization."

She is absolutely right. That is the responsibility of boards of directors who have been elected at the local level to serve the needs of the disabled, of the aged and those being discharged from hospital. If they don't have enough money to meet those needs, they have an obligation to make that public. That is what they have done and that is what the government represents and that is why we are dealing with a bill here today that will effectively have the government take over these agencies so that criticism can be muted, minimized and silenced, if at all possible.

I want to read from a release that came from the chair of our CCAC, Bob Fera, on November 8, who on that day resigned as chair of the CCAC because he felt this legislation was a hostile takeover and a slap in the face to all of the volunteers in the province of Ontario. He said:

"In my opinion their planned legislation is nothing more than smoke and mirrors to cover this government's lack of adequate funding and commitment for proper home care of our citizens.

"In my opinion this government wants duly elected board members from the community to be replaced by government appointees who will do the bidding of the government rather than take care of the legitimate needs of the frail and elderly."

As well, because this government has certainly implied that CCAC boards were not qualified to do the job that they were doing, that the problem was of mismanagement by any number of them, Bob Fera said the following:

"How wrong can a minister be!!

"On the contrary the history and development of the 43 CCAC boards of this province over the last five short years has been nothing short of spectacular and they should be congratulated. Recently, all we have been guilty of is telling the truth and alerting the community to our financial shortfall from this government and the expanding crisis in our delivery of services because of it.

"The real truth is that this government has not been forthcoming with the resources to match the demands of our aging community. Nor do they want to listen to solutions put forth by our association and workers on the front line. Now this very same unlistening government wants to lay the blame on the CCAC boards and staff, who are guilty of nothing more than trying to eke out limited home and personal care with the meagre dollars given out by this government, who still have not, after five years, enacted legislation to ensure that the level of home care services across this province are adequate, fair and equitable."

Let me go now to some of the people whom the government says home care is servicing, whom the government says this bill is all about, whom they're trying to protect, and that is seniors across the province. I want to speak first with respect to a press release that was put out by the Ontario Health Coalition on November 22 with respect to Bill 130. It says the following:

"Far from actually reforming the home care system set up by the provincial ... government in 1997, this act simply serves to silence the boards and CEOs of the CCACs who have recently become some of the government's most vociferous critics.... While this bill may achieve censorship of the CCACs, the problems resulting from the province's short-sighted health care policies are not going away.

"Despite ministerial promises to the contrary, there has been no consultation whatsoever on home care reform—reform that covers the fastest-growing sector in Ontario's health system. Bill 130 is a shocking assault on democracy and should be withdrawn."

I remind you, Speaker, that the Ontario Health Coalition is a network of 200 other community agencies and organizations, many of them seniors' organizations. Many of them rely on home care. Many of them want a public debate about home care needs. Many of them recognize that Bill 130 does nothing of the sort but instead attempts to muzzle the very people, the very boards and staff from CCACs who have been speaking out on their behalf in recent months.

This is a press release from the Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations, again the very group that the government says this bill is going to try to help:

"The government deliberately crippled the access centres with a funding freeze. When CCACs announced their only option was service cutbacks, indicating that they had no choice, given the government's actions, the government turned on them with this gag order." They say, "Adequate funding for home care must be restored and Bill 130, taking over the CCACs, must not be passed without going to committee hearings so that the public

can have genuine input into the plans for reorganizing long-term care."

1640

This is from the Ontario Nurses' Association, November 29: "It is unconscionable that this government would proceed with this bill without consultation and without tackling the critical problem of the chronic nursing shortage," said Barb Wahl, president. "They've been sitting on a report that shows the damaging impact of inequities in wages and benefits for nurses in the community sector, yet they have failed to act on it. As a result, we will continue to see an exodus of home care nurses from the province if concrete action is not taken." She concludes, "This regressive bill fails to address chronic underfunding and the nursing shortage that is plaguing the province's home care system. We want to see it withdrawn."

Again I mention that while the minister has said this isn't about funding, I've argued that of course it is. That has been confirmed by PricewaterhouseCoopers, which said, particularly with respect to the issue Barb Wahl raises, that the government absolutely has to invest in employees, particularly in nurses. Otherwise community care access centres will not be able to retain those employees to do the important work they do with clients, because they will continue to go into the hospital sector where wages are better. Yes, an investment of money is absolutely required. The government can't deny that. The government's own consultants have pointed that out. The government does nothing in this bill to deal with that particular, very difficult issue.

This came in yesterday from the Association of Jewish Seniors: "Our organization represents 5,000 seniors in the greater Toronto area." It says, "We are extremely distressed by the current situation regarding health care in the province. First, there have been extensive and hurtful cutbacks that are not in keeping with your government's stated intent to ensure appropriate access to essential home care services for all seniors in need of these services. Secondly, most importantly, it appears that CCACs are being targeted for problems that are not of their making. There is no justification for this government to take over the organizations. They are intended to be community based, governed by duly elected boards, selected by and accountable to the community which they serve. Our organization is adamantly opposed to Bill 130, which changes the government structure of CCACs. We urge you to withdraw your bill."

This came yesterday from the alliance of seniors, which represents over 350,000 seniors in the province: "Please be informed that our organization, representing some 350,000 seniors in Ontario, is totally opposed to Bill 130. This bill would allow the Ministry of Health to run the community care access centres devoid of direct input from the communities which they were created to serve. The provincial government's intended control over CCAC boards of directors and their CEOs is unprecedented and totally without foundation. It virtually removes community accountability and turns these organizations into provincial government bodies."

They urge the following to this government: "On behalf of our organization and the tens of thousands of citizens we represent, we urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to withdraw Bill 130 and your plans to take control over the governance and management of CCACs. Scapegoating CCACs is not the answer to the issues in home care. We strongly urge you to begin providing the financial support that home care must have." They offer their assistance to the minister, if the minister truly wants to have consultation, debate and dialogue on reform of the home care system.

So it is very clear that it's not just the opposition that has serious concerns about this bill and that views this bill as a hostile takeover by the government of CCACs. Many CCACs themselves, many directors, have had the courage to come forward and say the same. I wish more had. Other organizations, particularly those representing seniors, whom the minister purports to represent and whom the minister has said will benefit from this bill, have come forward and said the same. This is nothing more than a takeover of these boards. These boards are now being scapegoated by this government. The real problem is the current government's underfunding of home care at this time. What the government needs to do is increase funding rather than try to take over boards, muzzle them, silence them and make sure there is no more public criticism of the government.

It was for that reason that we wrote to the government House leader on November 19 and requested that the government hold public hearings on Bill 130. CCAC board members, employees and the many vulnerable people, especially the elderly, who depend on these services, are very concerned and we have demanded extensive, province-wide public hearings to allow those people whose lives will be affected to actually voice their concerns.

I want to make it clear that we are not going to be party to facilitating the government's passage of this bill. I listened to the minister last night, who, in response to a brief that's been put forward by the association, effectively said that none of the recommendations for amendments that were put forward by that association were going to be adopted by this government.

The fact of the matter is, even if they were adopted, I don't believe the recommendations that came forward from the association are strong enough. I think the association should have taken a very clear stand, as a number of individual boards and executive directors did, to say that the government should not be allowed to take over control of agencies that should be community-based and responsive to local communities.

I heard the minister say last night that they're not going to deal with the amendments that came forward from the organization anyway. Even if they were, we wouldn't agree to facilitate passage, because we believe that people around the province should have their say.

In short, the bill does nothing to improve home care for the thousands of seniors, the disabled and people being discharged from hospital who need it. The bill is all

about this government's appointing boards of directors, executive directors and senior managers responsible for what is disclosed by CCACs so that this government controls who is doing their bidding and what information is being released. It is completely undemocratic. There is no need for it, and we will not support it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Members now have up to two minutes for questions or comments.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I'd like to take the opportunity to speak for a couple of minutes on the comments made by the member from Nickel Belt. I'd like to just make a couple of brief comments on her opposition to appointed people being on any type of community care access corporation board of directors. In my comments last night, I talked about the few years I spent on the board of health in Simcoe county. At that point, we did in fact administer the home care and the homemaking program under one director. At that point, we had an eight-member board: four from the county of Simcoe, one from the city of Orillia, one from the city of Barrie and two people who were appointed by the provincial government. At that time it would have been the David Peterson government.

We were quite pleased with that structure. I thought it was very accountable to the taxpayers. The local taxpayers paid for a portion of the board of health budget—the environmental, dentistry and nursing divisions—and the large portion, home care, was paid 100% by the provincial government at that time. To me, those two provincial appointees on that committee were very valuable. We had some elected people as well as provincially appointed people. I thought it worked out very well as far as structure. We were accountable. At that time, I believe the home care program was around \$6 million for the county of Simcoe. Today, they're asking \$42 million for next year. It's ballooned with the tremendous growth in that area. I want to say that I personally was against leaving that structure back in the early 1990s.

1650

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River): I just wanted to make a quick comment on my colleague from Nickel Belt. She pointed out, very much so, the discrepancies and the undemocratic way this government went about Bill 130. It was rather surprising that my Conservative colleague from Simcoe North got up and ignored all of that. That is typical. I think he is reading from his House leader's directions, telling him what to say. But I think when you're sent here, you must represent the individuals within your community.

This Bill 130, as the member from Nickel Belt said, is almost insulting to the democratic process. Community input was completely ignored and this government continues to say, "We know what is right."

One of the things we are seeing now is that the crack in this government is widening. As they scatter around to find some sort of leader, each of them may be saying different words but they go in the same direction. People are seeing through them. People are seeing that basically

they have no direction. All they need to do or all they can do is to destroy—a revolution of destruction but no revolution of creation. There is no way, in a sense, that you can see that.

As a matter of fact, there is a sentence I saw here which should have described this government: "Good administration of public funds depends on good decisions based on good information." Actually, the auditor was making reference to this government and the way they should handle democracy and public funds. If somehow they had just followed that instruction and were accountable to the people who elected them, they would have made a better government. But the Conservative government today feels they are right in whatever they are doing and the people are wrong. They would feel much better off if this democracy could be without people and these arrogant individuals could dictate what they want.

The Deputy Speaker: Further questions or comments?

Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre): New Democrats oppose this bill. New Democrats have called for, and will continue to call for, full public hearings. This bill is an effort on the part of this government to further cripple home care services here in Ontario, to further undermine them and to launch yet another attack on the sick, the seniors and those with disabilities.

The member for Sault Ste Marie, Tony Martin, is here waiting to speak to this bill. He may or may not get a chance before 6 o'clock, and then after 6 he is going up to Ottawa, where tomorrow he will be participating as our caucus's member of the committee hearing submissions regarding the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. So Tony Martin, for the New Democrats, is going to be in Ottawa tomorrow at the Crowne Plaza hotel at 9 am. I expect that folks in Ottawa—well, the government is trying to ram that bill through too, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

There isn't much there. Persons with disabilities who have been waiting for years now for this government to keep its promise to produce meaningful legislation have been cheated and disappointed once again. But Tony Martin is going to be in Ottawa on behalf of the New Democrats tomorrow, Friday, at the Crowne Plaza hotel from 9 am, and the public is not only invited but encouraged to get out there and look at this government's dismal performance when it comes to legislating on behalf of and in the furtherment of the rights of persons with disabilities here in Ontario.

Just as Tony Martin is going to be in Ottawa on Friday, he will be in Windsor on Monday, again with the same committee, and folks in Windsor are not only invited to come out but encouraged to come out to see this government's dismal, pathetic betrayal of persons with disabilities here in Ontario.

As Tony Martin is on the road, Shelley Martel is here at Queen's Park, leading us New Democrats in our fight to ensure adequate levels of home care for those seniors, those sick and those disabled.

The Deputy Speaker: The Chair recognizes the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale. You have the floor.

Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale): It is a pleasure to make some comments on today's very important bill, Bill 130. I'm sure the people at home sometimes forget what we're talking about because everybody goes off on a tangent. In fact, the speaker from Niagara Centre, just two seconds ago, talked about what is happening with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act in Ottawa and where the committee is going. I just want to remind the viewers at home that that is not what we are talking about today. Today we are talking about the Community Care Access Corporations Act, 2001, which is Bill 130, and I'm going to come back to the point.

If you want to continue on reaching out and listening to people, we were actually in Sioux Lookout last week, on Friday, and we had a very constructive committee hearing. In fact, the leader of the third party, Howard Hampton, was there. What was happening there was an amalgamation of two hospitals. There's a hospital that is being run by the federal government, which is for the native people, as well as the hospital that is run by the province for everybody else and the native people. Native people felt that they were being segregated, and they are very happy that these hospitals are going to be amalgamated and that there are going to be better services provided. In fact, the leader of the third party himself agreed that the amalgamation of these hospitals is going to provide better service to the communities. I think that's exactly what we've been saying for the last six years.

On the other hand, coming back to the CCACs, we have been spending much more money compared to 1994-95. At that time, the money being spent in that area was \$695 million, and now we are spending, in 2001-02, \$1.2 billion.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Your time has expired.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: No, we've had four; please take your seat.

The member for Nickel Belt now has up to two minutes to respond.

Ms Martel: I appreciate the interventions of all of the members, but I have to say to the speaker who spoke last, I'm not sure what the amalgamation of the two hospitals in Sioux Lookout has to do with the bill before us.

When I started last night I said that it would not be a surprise to people that we are opposing this bill. In my opinion and the opinion of our party, it does nothing to improve home care in the province of Ontario and it has everything to do with this government taking control over CCACs to try and minimize or muzzle or silence the criticism that has been coming from these organizations over the last number of months as they point out that the current level of funding for home care is not enough to deal with the needs of seniors, the disabled and those being discharged from hospital.

I spent time last night going back to the point in May where of course people were made aware that they would incur deficits and the nature of the cuts that they were forced to impose, which has had dramatic effects on seniors and the disabled and those who are being discharged from hospital, many of whom can't afford to pay for these services. In essence, many of these cuts are forcing seniors into long-term-care institutions earlier than they would have had to go into those institutions, with a much greater cost on the health care system. I believe that doesn't make any sense.

I looked at the contents of PricewaterhouseCoopers and made it clear that the minister could implement these changes without taking the draconian steps she is taking in Bill 130, which are for this government to appoint the boards of directors, for this government to appoint executive directors, and for this government to control what information will be released publicly by CCACs. These recommendations can be implemented without the draconian measures. It's clear the reason the government is bringing those measures forward is because the government wants to take over these organizations, wants to muzzle, wants to silence them so that there won't be any more criticism of the government's underfunding of home care.

The Deputy Speaker: The floor is now open for further debate.

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): It's a pleasure to rise and speak to the bill before the House on the reform of community care access corporations in the province of Ontario.

The members opposite are decrying the bill. I know they have stood several times in the House and talked about people who have had an inability to access some services and a variety of other complaints in CCACs across the province.

I particularly recall the member for Hamilton East going after the Minister of Health about the CCAC in Hamilton, to do something about the CCAC in Hamilton. The minister did an operational review. The operational review was absolutely condemning of that CCAC, and I'll read from that operational review later. The minister then sent someone to be a supervisor of that Hamilton CCAC, and after asking and demanding that the minister do something about it, the member for Hamilton East stood up in the House and condemned the minister for acting on the report and doing what the member had been requesting that he do for quite some time. It just goes to show you that members opposite can get up and demand more money for this and more money for that, as they do with just about everything under the sun in the province of Ontario, they can take any side they want on any issue, but they ultimately aren't currently the managers of these different systems and the responsibility doesn't lie on their desks. The responsibility lies on the government desks and on the Minister of Health. When I read some of the reports I'm going to read to you tonight, the people at home listening will see why it is absolutely necessary that the government take action to fix the CCAC system throughout Ontario.

1700

Over the past couple of years I have had clients, doctors, hospital administrators, people in the long-term-care sector, nurses who actually provide the services for the CCACs and board members from all over the province talk to me about the problems with CCACs and the fact that we need to fix the CCACs. This government is listening to that, and we're fixing the CCACs.

CCACs are very important to us. It's part of our broad reform of the health care system in the province of Ontario, something the members opposite did nothing toward when they had a shot at government in this province. For instance, we're moving to build 20,000 new long-term-care beds in Ontario. A new bed had not been built since, I believe, 1988 or perhaps even earlier than that. We're building 20,000. It was bad planning by previous governments. They did not realize that the population was aging and that we would need more long-term-care facilities across the province.

At the same time, there's a move all across Canada to spend more money and put more resources into home care, having nurses, in effect, go to people's homes to deliver services there rather than having them for long periods of time in the more expensive hospitals. Everyone else moved in this direction, but the province of Ontario didn't do that until this government came into office in 1995. Since that time, we've increased funding for home care dramatically, to a point where it's about \$1.17 billion today. That's about a 70% increase province-wide since 1995. In some areas of the province, like my own in Niagara, we've had more than a 120% increase in the home care budget since 1995.

We'll have about 6,000 of these 20,000 long-term-care beds open by the spring of 2002. When we do that, we relieve pressure on the hospitals, because there are seniors occupying some of the hospital beds who are waiting for a long-term-care bed. We need to get those folks into long-term-care beds so that people who present themselves to a hospital and are critically ill and need admission to the hospital have a bed to be admitted to. That's why it's important to build those long-term-care beds, and as I said, about 6,000 will be open. Over 3,000 are open now and are operating and filled in the province of Ontario, but 6,000 will be open by the spring of next year. The rest of the 20,000 will follow after that in about a year's time. This is of vital importance and was totally neglected by the members opposite when they were in government.

Similarly, as I said, we've increased home care funding. If someone is in a hospital who doesn't need a long-term-care bed but can't quite go home, previously the only option was to stay in the hospital for more expensive care and in effect block—as some people have referred to it—a bed for someone in critical need of a bed. We can now send that person home and have that home care. That's what the CCACs are there to do: to make sure those services get delivered to those people most in need and to support the system in that way.

So there is that reform of the system. We're also, of course, moving with the Ontario Family Health Network.

We've added over 1,200 drugs to the Ontario drug benefit formulary over the past five years. We have 10,000 family practitioners across the province. If they were all enrolled in the Ontario Family Health Network, they could take about 2,000 patients. That means we have enough GPs for 20 million people. We have only 11.8 million people. So I think that move to adopt the Ontario Family Health Network is also an important reform.

That's an overview of where some of our reforms have gone and why the huge investment we've made in community care is important to the province of Ontario, why the huge investment we're making in long-term-care beds is important to the people of Ontario. A former health minister is here today, Minister Wilson, and he was part of that direction early on and getting us going in that direction.

At the same time, as I said at the outset, it is our job as government to ensure accountability to Ontario taxpayers and to demonstrate that accountability with performance that clearly shows how tax dollars are being spent. That's why we have advised the 43 CCACs, after years of more and more spending and actually several times at year-end going in and picking up deficits, that they must finally operate within their budgets. We're working with them to ensure that appropriate services are delivered within their budgets. We've encouraged them to employ good case management and a variety of other means.

In this frame of mind, and after having received complaints from the members opposite and frankly from many of our constituents and lots of people in the health care system, we asked PricewaterhouseCoopers to do a review of the CCACs across the province. Similarly, we had a very big problem in Hamilton, and we set out a group to do a report on the Hamilton CCAC.

As Duncan Sinclair said, who of course was the head of the Health Services Restructuring Commission, "You can't just apply a greenback poultice." In other words, an infusion of money will only create more problems in this sector. He said, "Don't do that." We tried that, actually. We were guilty of that, throwing money at this problem in the past couple of years. That, obviously, is not working, because we've thrown so much money at it and there are still problems with the right people getting services at the right time in this sector. We didn't want to continue down that road, and that's why the minister has come forward with some of the legislation she has come forward with.

I want to read to you some of the major findings and observations from the operational review of the Hamilton-Wentworth Community Care Access Centre. For the folks at home who are listening to this, when you hear this and when the members opposite hear this, how they can possibly conclude at the end of the day that "Everything was OK; we just needed to give them more money," is totally beyond me and says something about the members opposite. Let me read several of the findings.

Here's one. This is, again, from the operational review of the Hamilton-Wentworth Community Care Access

Centre: "The board, as investigated and stated in this report, is generally naive about its public accountability, arrogant in its modus operandi, largely oblivious to the need for proactive communications with its primary stakeholders, and lax in not acting more quickly on a worsening fiscal crisis when it confesses to have known about its own service delivery deficiencies." That's the second major finding.

Major finding number 3: "The board provided inadequate strategic direction and leadership, was ineffective in communicating with stakeholders including its staff, failed to ensure accountability and transparency in its operation, and by trying to manage the day-to-day operations, created a climate that made it difficult for CEOs to exercise their appropriate role."

Number 4: "A CCAC is a big business but the HWCCAC has a critical shortage of people with business skills or experience among both the board and senior management. As a result, there is a need for renewal of the board and a need to assess the skill mix of the senior management team."

They came right out and said, "You need a new group of senior management; you need a new mix of people."

Number 7: "There is no effective monitoring or management of service utilization and caseload, the greatest drivers of CCAC costs. As a result, existing resources are not used efficiently, leaving reduced resources available to provide the services intended under the CCAC mandate. There was little understanding of how monitoring could be improved, other than to obtain a new information system."

Number 8: "The system for assessing which clients should be the highest priority for services is inadequate." That is a major role of a CCAC. When it has service requests from clients, from doctors, from hospitals, from long-term-care centres, a major role of that CCAC one-stop shop is to properly assess and properly prioritize the people who are in the greatest need and make sure that those people who are in the greatest need get the service. That was not happening. That needed to be addressed, and it's clear from this report that it was not happening.

1710

Number 9: "The mandate of CCACs is to provide access to long-term-care services through case management and placement coordination processes. These processes were found to be weak. The case managers/placement coordinators seemed sufficiently capable but the weakness of the process was found to be mainly due to the direction the staff were receiving from senior management."

Number 11: "It appeared that the CCAC board and senior management did not recognize the importance of strong case management and placement coordination roles. This is a core business of a CCAC to ensure sufficient client service delivery and resource management. Together, these roles ensure that the right clients are provided with the right services at the right time, that services are adjusted as needs change, that clients are discharged as soon as the CCAC service is no longer

needed and that alternative services are found for clients no longer eligible, if necessary."

So you can see that any rational person—and the Minister of Health, as I know him, is an extremely rational person—who asked for a study to be done, an operational review of the Hamilton CCAC, and who read this report, who had this report across his desk, would act quickly and swiftly and strongly. Why? Because the seniors and some of the kids who get services from CCACs were the ones who were losing out if this was not addressed in Hamilton.

We did the PricewaterhouseCoopers study. The PricewaterhouseCoopers study was much politer. They didn't use language as strong as was used here, but many of the recommendations in the PricewaterhouseCoopers study were very similar. They talked about the problems of board renewal, they talked about the problems with senior management, they talked about many of the same problems that the Hamilton-Wentworth study talked about. So faced with two studies that talked about these problems, this government and Minister Johns and Minister Clement decided something needed to be done system-wide with the CCACs.

I would also say that once we sent in a supervisor to the Hamilton CCAC—and I've just read to you some of the major findings and observations from that report and anyone who listened would understand how shocking and scary those findings and observations were. When we sent in a supervisor to take over managing that CCAC, she reported back to us that things were actually worse than what the Hamilton review stated, and that's a scary thought. To do nothing puts all those people in Hamilton depending on CCAC services at risk. We can't in good conscience do that.

I also know from talking to people at other CCACs like my own in Niagara, board members think many of the problems that are stated here in the Hamilton-Wentworth report are the same types of problems that exist in the Niagara CCAC. I've heard that, as I've said before, from hospital administrators. I've heard that from doctors who have come to my office to tell me their concerns. I've heard that from long-term-care facilities that have told me they have concerns. I've had nurses who deliver services for the CCAC in Niagara call me at my office and tell me of their concerns. I have clients, one of whom comes by my house on her wheelchair on a regular basis and stops to talk to me. She has talked to me several times about her concerns with the CCAC in Niagara. The board members have talked to me about their concerns.

The supervisor we sent into Hamilton, who said it's actually worse than what the report says—which is shocking enough—has said to me that the same problems exist in the Niagara CCAC. Several of our members, I know from talking to the members on the government side, who represent every area of the province and CCACs all across the province, have also reported that they're experiencing and hearing about the same problems in their CCACs.

So the evidence is there in several reports, from all of our members talking to people in their health systems cross the province, that something needed to be done. That's why this government has taken action and introduced this bill. I think the bill will go a long way to addressing a lot of the problems that are in the PricewaterhouseCoopers report. Not only will it be about rejuvenating the boards and making sure that qualified senior management are in place to run CCACs, but also in this act new accountability responsibilities are required, including the creation of strategic plans to meet the government's vision and objectives; accountability relationships throughout the organization; developing evidence-based performance indicators to evaluate its own performance; regular and consistent monitoring and reporting to ministry offices on CCAC activities, including budget and service outcomes; and strengthening our service agreement to ensure consistent expectations and clear requirements in the operation of all CCACs.

Over the last few years, many of the CCACs have actually asked for this kind of definition and more definitions to put to this relationship between the Ministry of Health and the CCACs. One thing I think is important that this bill does is that each CCAC board must now establish a community advisory council to promote and enhance integration among the CCAC, long-term facilities, hospitals and other community service agencies. I have to tell you that I think that is a stroke of genius on the part of Minister Johns, because one thing that we clearly need throughout the province in our health care system is better integration. We can't continue to have—and we did for many years—hospitals in each city or several hospitals in cities all doing their own thing and not communicating with one another. The hospitals are not communicating well enough with long-term care facilities. The hospitals—

The Deputy Speaker: Please take your seat. Could I ask the opposition benches to just lower the level of discussion? It's starting to interfere with my ability to hear the speaker.

The member may continue. Sorry for the interruption.

Mr Maves: As I said, that integration between the hospitals themselves, between hospitals and long-term-care facilities, between long-term-care facilities and CCACs, with doctors, and now as we get more into family health networks, is very important to improving the system all across Ontario. I think we'll see some more regional integration where we'll perhaps have the health system in Niagara—if they get together and have committees of CCACs and long-term-care facilities and hospitals and their medical community, if they are more integrated and have a better system in Niagara, they can get together, Speaker, with your folks in the Hamilton area, where they have some excellent health care facilities and excellent health care people. I know a lot of our folks in Niagara come up to Hamilton for some of those specialized services that are offered in Hamilton, and some of those wonderful docs who are in Hamilton. We need to have that better regional coordination.

Putting this community advisory council in this bill, establishing that, I think is a stroke of genius on the part of Minister Johns and one that she needs to be congratulated for. She clearly understands, and having this part in the bill clearly says to the health care community, "We have to have better integration. Only with better integration are we going to have better delivery of services, are we going to have our health care institutions look after more appropriately the clients, who are our patients, who are all of our constituents."

It is with this overwhelming amount of evidence from the PricewaterhouseCoopers report, from the Hamilton-Wentworth CCAC report and from all of the discussions all of the members on this side of the aisle have had over time with people in the health care community that I believe this moves in the right direction to reform CCACs. To do anything else I think quite frankly would be irresponsible, not only to taxpayers who have now spent billions each year on home care, but to the clients, most importantly, who depend on the services from CCACs.

The Deputy Speaker: It is now time for questions and comments.

Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's): I listened closely to the member's speech. The member is making the case for why this bill is rational. I think that was one of the main thrusts of his argument. But that suggests for a moment that in fact this is a rational effort by the government to address home care in Toronto, to address the fact that the right providers are not getting the tools and are not being empowered to serve the community. What this will do is make an already disastrous problem worse. Surely that's irrational. That may be rational under Tory logic, but it's not fixing the government, which the Tories say is their mandate, nor is it in any way a step forward, obviously, for home care. The problem is simply this: the government knows it's in trouble with the CCACs, and in turn they are giving up on fixing home care. So the only thing they can do is bring in this paper tiger, this shield that in fact is going to make matters even worse.

1720

I want to applaud the CCAC board members in Toronto who have had the courage to come forward and stand up to this government and tell Ontario the truth. I applaud them for that. That took a lot of courage. They're great citizens for doing it. I know that we on this side of the House are inspired by that courage. I can also say that in a community as diverse as the riding I have the honour to represent, a one-size-fits-all macro approach, micro-management from Queen's Park, is going to be the worst solution possible.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the speech by the member for Niagara Falls. I know he tried hard to justify this takeover of CCACs by the government. I think he shared with us a prepared speech that is obviously the mantra, the public relations spin by the government to cover over this complete and total takeover of boards that are so important to every community across this province for

the delivery of home care and long-term care to all kinds of people.

The bill represents a total takeover, with CCAC boards and the executive director to be appointed by cabinet. This takeover is unprecedented within the sector and across all other services in the province. There will be a complete loss of community control. Currently, one third of the board must be made up of consumers or caregivers in the community. There will now be no community consultation but lots of consultation within the government and within cabinet on who gets appointed to the various positions.

Despite the title, the community advisory council that each board is required to establish will not be a community-oriented board but rather a body of professionals appointed by the board. The minister does not have to make available any information about each corporation, with the exception of an annual report.

The quality and level of service must always be treated as more important than governance, and that's not the case with this bill. This government set up CCACs, starved them of resources, created a shambles and is now trying to silence all criticism coming from the CCAC boards and staff. It would do you well to take a look at the comments of the member for Nickel Belt if you really want to understand what this bill is about, what it does and then again what it doesn't do.

Mr Curling: It's unfortunate, actually: the member from Niagara Falls had the opportunity to come clean with the Legislature and tell people exactly what his government is doing with the CCACs, come clean that these are community individuals who understand the concerns, who for a long time have been telling the government that their process has been underfunded and the treatment of these organizations by the government was deplorable and needed to be fixed. But what happened? He comes and defends this situation as if nothing happened. The big bully has come and said, "Community input is not important. Who we appoint and who we put forward in this process by government is better."

If the government of the day just for one moment would realize that the people are seeing through them just like glass—they're looking right at them and saying, "You're not coming clean with us." The auditor has said that. The auditors said that not only are you keeping two separate books, but you are telling folks that you are spending all this money, counting projections five or 10 years down the road and then counting it in one year. They're seeing through you.

I was very disappointed with the member from Niagara Falls, whom I respect tremendously—I've seen him handle some very tough roles here; they were in the wrong direction, but they were tough roles you were handling—to find out, after all these years, that he'd have learned to come clean with the Legislature. Here he is now defending something that is not defendable. People are seeing through you. We know that when the time comes, the only way they can exercise this in a forceful way is to make sure that this façade that goes on with this government stops by an election.

Mr Kormos: I want to make it clear once again that New Democrats oppose this bill and insist that it go out to meaningful public hearings. We will debate the bill for as long as we have to. We will be calling upon Tory backbenchers to show some good judgment and join us in voting against it and defeating it.

Niagara region is in crisis. Niagara, amongst other things, is one of the aging regions of Ontario; indeed, of Canada. One of the top three issues that we have to deal with in our constituency offices is the ongoing reduction in the amount of home care that's being provided for seniors, for sick people, for people fresh out of hospital because, as you know, hospitals are keeping people for shorter and shorter periods of time. People going into the hospital for surgery are being released the same day. Those folks are having to rely upon home care, and the home care services simply aren't there. As if it weren't bad enough now, the real crisis is yet to come because Niagara, as an aging community, is going to see more and more demand on home care services.

This government has abandoned home care. It has abandoned those sick, those vulnerable, those post-operative patients. It has abandoned the persons with disabilities, people who require the home care services, people whom home care services permit to remain in their own homes and live with some level of dignity, decency and independence. If you think home care is expensive, the option—which is institutionalizing people, putting them into seniors homes, putting them into hospital rooms—is 10, 20, 30 times as expensive.

This bill merely camouflages the problem. That's all it does. In fact, it aggravates the problem because Tory hacks—and we've seen enough of them go through the boards and agencies committee hearings—are going to be placed on these boards who will be nothing but apologists for the regressive policies of this very punitive government.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Niagara Falls now has up to two minutes to respond.

Mr Maves: In response to some of my colleagues' comments from across the way, I want to assure them, first of all, that when board members are appointed to the CCAC boards, these board members are going to come from local communities. The member opposite decried and said that they'd be micromanaged from Toronto and there wouldn't be any local community flavour on these boards. I can assure you, that will not be the case. The government will work very hard to find—and this is very important—qualified people to run these boards.

The Hamilton and PricewaterhouseCoopers reports clearly show—the members opposite just have to pick up the reports and read them—that too many people were running these boards, senior management, some of whom were in over their heads. The problem with that is that the seniors who get the services, the kids who get the services, are the ones who suffer. We need to find qualified local people, and we'll do that.

Similarly, the member from Niagara Centre talked about Niagara's need for long-term care. If you'd listened

at the beginning of my speech, I talked about the 20,000 beds we're building. I talked about the need to move people out of hospitals and into those beds and look after them in home care. I also said that CCACs had received about a 70% increase. Over \$1.1 billion, up from about \$600 million, is now being spent on home care. That's not starving it of funds, as the member for Sault Ste Marie said—70% province-wide. What has been Niagara's increase? Over 120% in that time period.

Mr Hudak and I have pitched long and hard to make sure that Niagara got its fair share and then some, because after 10 years of Liberal and NDP governments, Niagara was behind. It was important that we address that, and we did.

Finally, the NDP has supported us on this. We are now spending \$6.1 billion more on health care. The federal government is continually reducing their share of funding for health care. I'd like the provincial Liberals to step up to the plate on that one.

1730

The Deputy Speaker: The floor is now open for further debate.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston): This is truly a sad time for us in this Legislature, when we have to debate the ruinous way in which this government is conducting itself when it comes to home care services.

I forgot to say, Mr Speaker, that I will be splitting my time with my colleague.

But it is an absolute disgrace that in this day and age, after the unprecedented boom and tremendous wealth that was created in this province, this government should deem it necessary to cut home care by \$175 million. That was the shortfall that CCACs were facing this year. So it becomes necessary, after all of this, for the government to then turn around and say, "The local community members that made up these CCAC boards could not properly manage the dollars that were required in order to have all of the home care provided in the communities that was necessary."

Well, the fact of the matter is, people were being put on waiting lists in CCACs right across this province. Why? Because the demand has grown. It has nothing to do with the fact that we have appointees by this government or appointees who were made up of community members right across this province. The fact is, there is a true shortfall in the number of dollars that was flowing for that type of service to be provided. Some \$175 million, to be exact, was short from last year's budget.

In the North York CCAC alone, in my community, they were facing a \$10-million shortfall. So what were they forced to do? Any good operation would have to say to itself, "We simply can't make ends meet," so they came back to the government and said they were short. What did this government do? It said, "You know what? We don't like what you're saying. You are mismanaging your affairs. We're going to take you over."

That's what this bill represents. It represents this government suggesting to everyone that they don't like what they're hearing so they are going to gag these

people on the CCACs. In fact, they are going to eliminate them. "If we don't like what you're saying, then we're going to just get rid of you." If the government doesn't like what it hears, it just gets rid of people. It eliminates them. It cuts funding. It eliminates boards that are duly elected by communities, that are representative of those communities, and then it suggests that it can do a better job.

At the end of the day, what's going to happen is that the waiting lists will get longer. There will be more needy people waiting for home care who won't be getting it. And who are these people? They are the frail elderly, the disabled, the most vulnerable people in our community.

It's totally unfair of the government to suggest that these boards somehow mismanaged their funds. It's a complete falsehood, a complete myth that that was the case when in fact the demand has grown right across this province. As I say, in my community it is absolutely a disgrace—and I've met with many people in my constituency office to discuss this very real crisis that we have facing Ontario—that 70-year-olds who are caring for their elderly parents who are in their 90s were forced to do so without any assistance from home care, people like Mr Frank Derango in my riding, who himself is 70 years old and was providing care for his mother at home. She was receiving some home care. Unfortunately, Mr Derango is undergoing cancer treatment. It is a tragedy that he found out that he had cancer. He is undergoing cancer treatment himself. He has applied for home care and he's been told that he will have to wait three months before they can address his concerns and his needs. Three months—that's the minimum, and it could be that it will be six months, because this government continues to underfund CCACs.

It's just not—I was going to say "not truthful," and I can't use that word, Mr Speaker, to the government. But they are not forthcoming when they suggest to people that somehow the demands aren't there. The demands are certainly there.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Cordiano: What is this government saying to people? What are they saying to the frail elderly out there? "Forget it. You look after yourselves. Look after your families; look after your elderly. Seventy-year-olds, it's your problem. You've got elderly 90-year-olds in your family? You look after them, because we haven't got any more money."

Well, Mr Speaker, is it any wonder? The government wants to proceed with a \$2.2-billion corporate tax cut in the face of all these demands, in the face of all these needs. And what are they saying? "Well, that will create jobs." In fact, we're losing jobs right now.

Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean): Check the record.

Mr Cordiano: We're losing jobs: 29,000, to be exact, in the last six months, and it's anticipated that somewhere in the neighbourhood of 150,000 jobs will be lost this year.

Mr Guzzo: Eight hundred thousand—

Mr Cordiano: That comes as a result—

The Deputy Speaker: Take your seat, please. Stop the clock. I don't want to have to ask the member from Ottawa West-Nepean again to please refrain.

Sorry for the—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker: Pardon me?

Mr Guzzo: I will refrain.

The Deputy Speaker: That's fine. That's what I like to hear, that you will. Now please do it.

Mr Guzzo: I want to please.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Sorry for the interruption. Please continue.

Mr Cordiano: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

We have pleaded with the government, those of us on this side of the House. We have pleaded with the government. This is a very, very serious crisis. It is very real. The people who are trying to cope with this situation are unable to continue coping. Can you imagine in this year of 2001, in this province, as wealthy as we are, that we simply cannot afford to look after the frail elderly? By the way, they are staying in their own homes, which means it will cost the health care system far less than to institutionalize the frail elderly. They're doing us a favour by remaining in their homes, and all they are asking for is a little bit of help, which would go a long way. This government simply turns its back on these very vulnerable people.

I can repeat the story that I've just told about Mr Frank Derango many times over. There are many people in my riding who face similar circumstances, and they are pleading with me and with the government to do something, provide additional resources, because it's cheaper than putting people in institutions. It's cheaper; they realize that, and they are willing to do their part. After all, what could be fairer than that, that families are willing to do their part to look after the frail elderly? They're doing their part—heroic efforts. Many of these people spend countless hours looking after the elderly. In fact, many of these people also volunteer to help other institutions, and they're simply asking for a little bit of help, which would go a great deal further in providing that kind of assistance.

As I say, it would help all of us in Ontario to reduce the costs. Everyone's trying to pitch in. Everyone means well. But when you have a government that continues to ignore legitimate, reasonable demands that are being made by citizens, then I say that this government doesn't deserve to be where it is. If you fail to deal with the most vulnerable in our community, then shame on you. There is no other way to look at it.

1740

I've been in this Legislature through three different administrations, and I've got to tell you that this is just at the lowest level. When we reach this point where we cannot assist people who are in that kind of need, great need, then we'll rue the day. We'll look back on this time if you don't do something about it. It's not sufficient to

say we're going to take over these boards because they're being mismanaged. That is a falsehood. The fact of the matter is you have to properly fund these CCACs and they will do their jobs. They have been doing their jobs with what limited resources they had and the odds were against them.

I turn it over to my colleague.

Mr Curling: I really appreciate the opportunity to speak on Bill 130, the Community Care Access Corporations Act.

You may recall, Mr Speaker—and I know that these concerns are very deep and close to your heart—that when the member for Windsor West and my colleague from Thunder Bay-Atikokan came to this House and put the question before the minister that Thunder Bay had to cut \$9 million from their budget in order to balance their budget as dictated by this government—because they were obsessed about bringing through a balanced budget and were neglecting the needs and not addressing the cause—she warned them that to do that, what they had to do in that area was that many patients who were discharged and couldn't get the care needed from the community had to go for weeks without even changing the bandages off their sores or to have a bath. This comment just turned their eyes and their heads away from all of this, not understanding all of this. The member came day after day, telling the minister there's a great need out there to be addressed, and they continued to cut back on all the services and the support needed for the CCAC.

The fact is that it came to light that one of the ministers over there, if you recall, the former minister of education at the time, said he had to create a crisis in order to solve anything around here. When the true crisis came to them, they couldn't handle it. Of course they have created this crisis, and when the people spoke out and said, "Here is how we can address it," they addressed it in this form. First, as I have often said in this House and this is obvious, how this government behaves, as soon as they see democracy they get very frightened. As soon as they see participation by the people, they get confused, because people get in the way of their governance. It poses a threat to the way they manage things.

They don't understand that community input brings out the truth in any community. They understand the needs and they know what to do to address those needs, but it interferes with their kind of ideology, because they are obsessed, of course, that whatever money they have, if they give it to the rich or give it to their corporate friends—which they are called in this creative way about tax deduction—things will magically happen.

This Conservative government is extremely creative and wonderful when they have money. As soon as there is a recession, if you want to call it, they become all panicked because all they can do and deal with are those on the top end. But those that you are elected for—because those people at the top don't really need government to foster them and give them welfare. As you'll recall, a very famous individual said that they're a

bunch of “corporate welfare bums.” The fact is they get the money, and those down on the bottom end who need the support of government—those who are destitute, elderly and lame, who need government, who have put their sweat into the country and the province and were many times underpaid and abused in the workforce—are sometimes needing more support from the government. But this government doesn’t see it that way. They feel that they should neglect those and that whatever came to them in those times is all due to them.

Here they are now. They feel if they appoint their own people on this board, where they can manage them, it will be a better way for them, where they can manipulate them.

One of the members over there said the standing committee on government agencies is a wonderful way to appoint people. I’ve sat on that committee, Mr Speaker, and the people out there should know what happens. If you’re a member of the Conservative Party and they want to pay you off, they put you on a board. Many of the people who come before us haven’t got a clue what they’re about. I am convinced that when the CCAC boards have been appointed by these government people, they wouldn’t even know what they’re there for. They’ll be given direction on how to vote and what to do. They are being compensated for maybe knocking at doors for some of those Conservative members but are not able to do the things that are needed in the community. I am appalled and shocked at what the results will be eventually.

Mr Speaker, you know that Dalton McGuinty and this caucus will not be supporting this bill. We think it’s wrong. We feel it is the wrong direction. And we’re not saying that alone. It’s not just the opposition saying that. There are individuals in the community. The Ontario Nurses’ Association came out very strongly and said, “Ontario’s community health nurses are fed up with the provincial health policy that has meant restricted patient access, rationed home care services and difficult working conditions for front-line nursing care providers and home care case managers.”

These are people on the front line who are saying the government is doing nothing to assist them in resolving the problem and the dilemma in which they find themselves. They further say that “this legislation will prevent the CCACs from making the best decisions for patients requiring home care and nursing care.” As I said, it is the people in the community who understand it. It’s not those they may appoint to some board who are given direction.

Somehow there’s a similar tone in the Conservative members as they speak, as if they’re speaking from one briefing note given to them, maybe by their minister or by their Premier, to say, “This is the direction we should go,” and are blinded by it all. No one over there seems to speak about their community and the community’s needs. If they did, they would be speaking about the elderly who need care, the nurses who are saying, “You must support and fund us adequately enough to provide those services.” It’s not being done. It’s not being done because

they are blinded by all their ideological ways and the direction they want to go.

Just today, Mr Speaker, you read with great interest and disappointment how they fudged the books on how much money they have spent in health care. The fact is that they were going to the feds all the time and saying, “We want money or we’re going to privatize this.” In the meantime, they hadn’t spent what they were saying. They hadn’t spent within the time. They were counting ahead. The auditors have warned them that they must not do that.

They talk about accountability by the CCACs, and yet they were not accountable to the people. They weren’t even accountable to the auditors. In some instances, they were locking the auditors out from getting the information, so that they could report to the public at large how they spent that money.

They’re going further. They’re going to the extent where they will say, “We will do the appointments to those boards, people we can maybe manipulate and control.” The fact is, all the people within that community are able to identify those individuals who know those concerns. But this government feels that when they go to the standing committee on government agencies, paying them off maybe because of some political deeds they’ve done, they’ve answered that question.

We will suffer more for that. It’s tough times now, and it’s going to get even worse. As a matter of fact, they’re going to select their leader. Mike Harris is jumping ship, and the others are jumping back on. There is no difference with any of them. Whoever takes the ship will be sinking it.

But there is hope, as I said. Sometimes I may sound rather depressing. The young folks who are listening may feel, “My golly, where are we going?”

1750

But there is hope. We have a party and a leader, Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals, that have shown them the alternatives with which to go, and I feel that this great province, with these wonderful people within it—the elderly who we must look after, the young people, the lame, the sick, the disillusioned—will be looked after, not be cast aside to sleep on the roads like now, or not be able to have their bandages changed because the government has not funded the program adequately. This party will make sure that those monies that are to be spent in the right direction will go there to look after the elderly and the sick and the lame, because we are, in all, a rich province and can do the job with the right people, the right government.

The Deputy Speaker: The members now have two minutes for questions or comments.

Mr Martin: I want to commend the member for Scarborough-Rouge River for his comments. He pointed out very clearly the shortcomings in this bill, some of the very frightening features that exist therein and why that his party will not be supporting it. I would suggest that it parallels very closely the reasons that our party won’t be supporting it either.

Our caucus will definitely be voting against this bill that does absolutely nothing—as the member for Nickel Belt earlier today suggested—to improve the delivery of home care in this province. It does not put another penny in, does not deal with the many difficult scenarios unfolding in community after community across this province where home care is concerned, no less in my own community of Sault Ste Marie, where family after family who came to depend on or understand that that service might be there are now discovering otherwise.

They were hoping this government would come forward with a whole comprehensive package of initiatives that would offer to communities some new hope, some new resources, so that they might meet some of the pent-up demand that's out there right now. But no, that's not what we have. What we have in front of us here, as the member for Scarborough-Rouge River said, is a bill that basically takes power back from communities and positions it in the hands of government, within cabinet, to make appointments to boards of directors of community care access centres, to appoint executive directors and to control the flow of information so that even those who want to understand what's going on, because they're seeing the diminishing of services, will no longer be able to get the information they need to make a proper judgment about that.

The Deputy Speaker: Member for Niagara Falls, are you standing? You're now sitting. The member for London West.

Mr Bob Wood (London West): I noted with interest that the member who spoke commended much of the excellent work that has been done by the CCACs, yet I think he failed to recognize some of the problems that have existed. I thought that was a very considerable flaw in the argument he offered to the House. I think we do have to recognize there are some problems.

I do not accept the view that having the cabinet appoint the board of directors is a negative move. I think, in fact, letting the representatives of the people appoint the people who are actually going to carry out the work of the people is a step forward, not a step backward.

I think, however, in considering this bill, there are also some other things that have to be done. When we recognize that reform is needed—and I think that is fairly widely recognized, though I fear that some of the members on the opposition side may not fully recognize the need for changes—we should recognize that there may well be more changes to be made than are only made in this bill. In that regard, I would refer members to the question of whether or not we should have a list of services that are to be provided to all residents of this province by the CCACs. That's something that many CCACs would support and I think there's some merit in taking a look at that.

If we do that, it does have the problem, of course, that financial control is more difficult. If we have agreed to provide these services and there's a demand for these services, we're going to have to fund them. But on the other hand, when we look at what medical science tell us,

which is that it is better to care for a lot of people who used to be cared for in the hospital in the community, we have to recognize that that need is there and we have to meet that need. I would hope the government, over the next year or two years, will consider that suggestion as well as making the changes that they are making.

Mr Ted Chudleigh (Halton): There's a lot of talk about this bill, about its being about the negative criticism we get out of the CCACs. Basically I don't buy that. This bill is about the management aspects of the CCACs and how the CCACs across Ontario are being managed. Some of them are being managed fairly well; some of them are not. There's a great deal of variance across the province as to how these are being managed. To bring some consistency to this management: that's what we need this bill for, so that there's some kind of responsibility.

No matter what any government does about a government program, you can't shut down criticism of a program or an operation. My riding association in my constituency office receives phone calls on many different issues. I know if we're being criticized on an issue, if it's CCACs—in fact, I've received many calls on the CCACs, both negative and positive. There are people phoning up, telling me what a great job the CCAC did for them in a particular instance. I also receive phone calls that are quite heart-rending, in some cases, about people who didn't feel they got as much service as possible from a CCAC. That criticism is not the issue.

It was actually an NDP program, an NDP idea, that put this whole program together. It came together in about 1996, I think, when it initially brought together all the VONs and the various organizations under one roof—a one-stop shop. Three, four or five years after it was put together, it's time to do a reassessment, a re-jigging, a remodification of the kinds of things this organization does. That's what this bill's about.

The Deputy Speaker: Response?

Mr Maves: To the members opposite, I thank them for this participation in the debate. There are a couple of comments I'd like to address to the member for Scarborough-Rouge River. He didn't think we spoke of our own local communities. That's not true. If he goes back and reads Hansard, he'll see that I spoke of Niagara. He says we're all reading from a note provided by someone. I look at everybody's desk and, again, that's not true. In fact, one of the things I spoke directly from was the Hamilton-Wentworth CCAC study. I've read the whole study and I encourage the member opposite to also get hold of and read the whole study. If he does, he will see quite clearly that there is indeed a need for action and, I believe, this action.

There is one thing I want to say to the members from the Liberal Party before I go tonight, before we finish the session for the weekend. One thing you can really do for the people of Ontario is to stand up to Jean Chrétien and the federal Liberals, who continually refuse to properly fund health care in Ontario. Every party of every political stripe—Liberal, NDP and Conservative—all across this

country agrees that the federal Liberal government is the only government cutting health care funding, even the NDP in this province. Howard Hampton has stood up, he has signed a letter and he has said to Jean Chrétien, "You're underfunding. You're not properly funding health care."

Back in 1993, 18 cents of every health care dollar spent in Ontario came from the federal government. A couple of years ago that had dropped to 11 cents on the dollar. There were actual Canada health and social transfer cuts by the federal Liberal government. What scares me, what worries me the most, is that Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberals are the only group of people in Canada who refuse to accept that, and who refuse to stand up to their federal cousins. They could really help Ontarians if they would do that.

Mr Cordiano: Let's be very clear about this: Bill 130 is nothing short of an effort by this government to silence its critics. The fact of the matter is that CCACs have been underfunded. When the government chose to freeze their budgets, they were underfunded by \$175 million right across this province. Let's make no mistake about that. When this party, this Conservative government, can't find a legitimate reason for what they're doing, they blame everyone else. They blame the federal government for a lack of funds; they blame the opposition for not standing up to Ottawa, as if somehow that's going to

work; they blame the CCACs for mismanagement. They blame everybody and their uncle. Do you know what? The blame, the fault, lies with you. The fact of the matter is, the federal government gave you an additional \$1.2 billion in transfers last year. What did you do with that? You are going to give corporations a \$2.2-billion tax cut, and you accelerated personal income tax cuts.

What people are saying out there in the public is, "Do something about health care. Listen to us." It is a desperate situation with home care. They are at their wits' end. They cannot put up with the fact that this government isn't providing the necessary funding for home care in the face of a real crisis where 70-year-olds in this province are now required to care for their 90-year-old parents. That is just disgraceful, totally and utterly unacceptable, and anybody you talk to across this province will tell you the same thing: it is shameful that this government would turn its back on the most vulnerable in our society. Thank you.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: If you two are finished—

Interjection: No, we're not.

The Deputy Speaker: No? Then I'll sit down and you can continue. Oh, you're done now. Glad to hear it.

It now being after 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, December 3, at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1802.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

Clerks at the Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Huron-Bruce	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Health and Long-Term Care) / ministre sans portefeuille (Santé et Soins de longue durée)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Burlington	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (PC) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (PC) (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Don Valley West / -Ouest	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Markham	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (PC) Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Loisirs	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail		
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nepean-Carleton	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué au dossier de l'Enfance, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nipissing	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oakville	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC) Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa-Orléans	Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (PC) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales	Thornhill	Molinari, Tina R. (PC)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	Stewart, Hon / L'hon R. Gary (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip, deputy government House leader / ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement, leader parlementaire adjoint	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) Minister of Education, government House leader / ministre de l'Éducation, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Whitby-Ajax	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Willowdale	Young, Hon / L'hon David (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

Estimates / Budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Gerard Kennedy
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Alvin Curling
Gilles Bisson, Alvin Curling, Gerard Kennedy,
Frank Mazzilli, Norm Miller, John R. O'Toole,
Steve Peters, Wayne Wetlaufer
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

Finance and economic affairs / Finances et affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Marcel Beaubien
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Doug Galt
Marcel Beaubien, David Christopherson,
Doug Galt, Ernie Hardeman, Monte Kwinter,
John O'Toole, Gerry Phillips, Joseph Spina
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

General government / Affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Steve Gilchrist
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle, Garfield Dunlop,
Steve Gilchrist, Dave Levac, Norm Miller,
Michael Prue, Marilyn Mushinski
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

Government agencies / Organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: James J. Bradley
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Michael Gravelle
James J. Bradley, Leona Dombrowsky, Michael Gravelle,
Bert Johnson, Tony Martin, Frank Mazzilli,
Jerry J. Ouellette, Bob Wood
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Justice and Social Policy / Justice et affaires sociales

Chair / Présidente: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Carl DeFaria
Toby Barrett, Marcel Beaubien, Michael Bryant,
Carl DeFaria, Garry J. Guzzo, Peter Kormos,
Lyn McLeod, Tina R. Molinari
Clerk / Greffier: Tom Prins

Legislative Assembly / Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Margaret Marland
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Julia Munro
Ted Arnott, Marilyn Churley, Caroline Di Cocco,
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Margaret Marland, Julia Munro,
Jerry J. Ouellette, Joseph N. Tascona
Clerk / Greffière: Donna Bryce

Public accounts / Comptes publics

Chair / Président: John Gerretsen
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Vacant
Bruce Crozier, John Gerretsen, Raminder Gill,
John Hastings, Shelley Martel, Bart Maves,
Julia Munro, Richard Patten
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Regulations and private bills / Règlements et projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Rosario Marchese
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Garfield Dunlop
Gilles Bisson, Claudette Boyer, Garfield Dunlop,
Raminder Gill, Pat Hoy, Morley Kells,
Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin, Bill Murdoch,
Wayne Wetlaufer
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

Alternative fuel sources / Sources de carburants de remplacement

Chair / Président: Doug Galt
Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente: Marie Bountrogianni
Marie Bountrogianni, James J. Bradley, Marilyn Churley, Doug
Galt, Steve Gilchrist, John Hastings,
John R. O'Toole, Jerry J. Ouellette, Ernie Parsons
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

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